

PUNCH, JUNE 3 1959

WEEKLY COMEDY

Punch

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thePunch

WINESTEAD PAPER
PRINTING

Life's simple pleasures

The sea, we are often told, is in our blood, and this circumstance will no doubt be put forward as the reason why every member of our island race enjoys above all else the pastime usually described as 'messing about in boats'. But the generalisation has the defects of all generalisations. We know people who would view with foreboding the prospect of embarking in any vessel of smaller consequence than a 50,000 ton liner. We know others, of course, for whom a voyage in even the least seaworthy of dinghys is a delight beyond compare.

We operate full scale Midland Bank branches on board the liners Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, Mauritania and Caronia. We have another at the Ocean Terminal, Southampton. All these branches exist to provide Midland Bank service for the traveller while he is travelling — and you can't call that 'messing about' in boats.



PUNCH

Vol. CCXXXVI No. 6199

June 3 1959



Articles

736 ARTHUR MARSHALL
Once Again Assembled Here: Eric, or Much of a Muchness

739 B. A. YOUNG
The Daily Mirabelle

741 H. F. ELLIS
Portrait of an Industrialist

743 SIMON RAVEN
For Whom the Bell Tolls

745 PATRICK SKENE CATLING
Pep Talk in a Broiler Factory

746 BERNARD HOLLOWOOD with
SHERIFFS
Hard Passage for India

749 J. B. BOOTHROYD
An Office System

750 E. S. TURNER
Any Moment Now—the Nightshirt

761 ALEX ATKINSON with
RONALD SEARLE
By Rocking-Chair Across Russia

Verse

740 RICHARD MALLETT
Geneva Jingle

751 J. B. BOOTHROYD
Quid Pro Quo?

Features

748 TOBY COMPETITIONS

752 FOR WOMEN

754 IN THE CITY
Lombard Lane

754 IN THE COUNTRY
Elizabeth Cayley

Criticism

755 BOOKING OFFICE
Eric Keown: New Fiction

757 BALLET (C. B. Mortlock)

757 THEATRE (Alex Atkinson)

759 FILMS (Richard Mallett)

760 ART (Adrian Daintrey)

760 RADIO (Bernard Hollowood)

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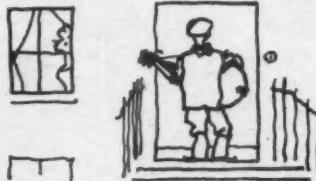
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The London Charivari

TAKE-OVER bids are getting too complicated for a part-time economist like me; it is becoming hard to say off the cuff whether Watneys are now running *Debrett* (the peerage and beerage link is an old cliché), or if Clore is now the effective master of Freeman, Hardy and Titbits, or what it is that Odhams have got that Tube Investments haven't. On a more philosophic note, all thoughtful students of breweries must regret their acquisition by interests not moulded in malt. Without being maudlin, it is fair to say that certain favoured brews have been experimented with, developed and improved over the decades with loving care to a point not far short of perfection, at least to some tastes. For all this to be turned over to a mere financier seems rather like nurturing a delicate child through to sturdy manhood and then selling him at a slave auction. But money, as well as beer, is good for you.

Clean Fun Preferred

I IMAGINE that the Ministry of Fuel's suggestion that in future "the coalman



must woo the housewife" has been received somewhat coolly by milkmen.

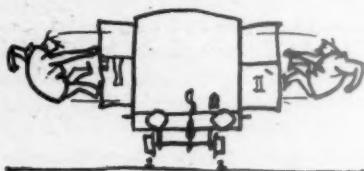
Dumb Animals Aloft

THERE was no doubt how we ought to react when the dog Laika went into orbit. In the first place, he was a

dog, in the second, he was fired by the Russians; that made disapproval almost automatic. But now the Americans have put up some monkeys, and the case is more difficult to decide. Originally I understood they were to kick off with mice, a proceeding that virtually every woman, at any rate, would approve. Perhaps a scale might be worked out of animals suitable—from the emotional, not the scientific, point of view—for sending into space. Dogs, *pace* the Russians, would come almost at the bottom, with only horses below them. Men, I imagine, would come at the top. Especially top men.

Mind the Doors

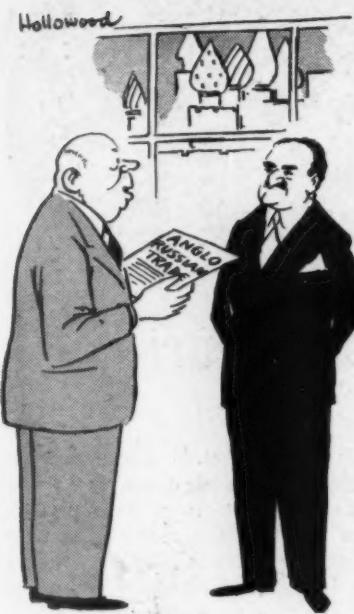
I SEE that Sir Brian Robertson has told the N.U.R. that "the door remains open." It's bad enough when politicians



keep falling back on this trusted negotiations cliché, but any railwayman who reads his accident statistics might have steered clear for once.

Not Cricket

IN Berlin the British have made their headquarters in what used to be Hitler's Stadium, and our correspondent there was so ill-advised as to ask how it was possible to keep the troops occupied in so restricted an area. "In Berlin," said the Major, gazing around at the Stadium, "one must never



"One of them tried to flog me second-hand cotton machinery, surplus coal and ex-army dubbin and blanco."

ask what anybody does. We live from day to day, but at any rate we are prepared. This is the inner citadel. It is here that we will withdraw to make our last stand if ever the worst comes to the worst." In fact the place on which the last stand will be made is the cricket ground and the cricket ground at present has a matting wicket. What a way to receive a visiting team! So while diplomats wrangle at Geneva busy soldiers hurry across the Stadium with barrowfuls of turf, quietly laying the first grass wicket in Berlin. "What use are matting wickets for anyone who wants to get anywhere with his batting?" asked the Major. "But will you have it ready this year?" asked our correspondent. "Oh, no, it won't be any good this year," answered the Major. "But we hope to be playing on it by 1961."

Pray Silence

A WEEK of silence is the target in Paris, where all noise, including the murmur of the trees on the boulevards, is to be measured. ("And then there crept a little noiseless noise among the leaves.") How the taxis

will fit into this Elysian scene is uncertain; the drivers are far from Trappists, nor are their horn solos scored *pianissimo*. The noisiest street corner ever recorded was not in Paris but at the junction of Sixth Avenue and Thirty-fourth Street in New York, composed of an intersection of three main thoroughfares, three surface car lines and a double track line of the elevated railway, and the normal man was rendered two-thirds deaf. Still, I believe the truth about noise is that many lifelong city-dwellers like it and feel lonely without it, as did Kipling's soldier on the road to Mandalay, complaining that the silence 'ung that 'eavy you was 'arf afraid to speak.

Correct Complaint

THE Polish woman who successfully sued a shop in Katowice for refusing to sell her a dress that was displayed in the window is a healthy sign. The lady was even whooped on by the journal of the Polish lawyers' association. The resurgence of the customer could lead to the resurgence of the citizen. The next thing we know, there'll be a Moscow edition of *Which?*

March of Progress: Air Dept.

THE Daily Mail's offer of a £10,000 prize for the fastest journey between



"I need a holiday. I just put in a take-over bid for something I already own."

the Marble Arch and the Arc de Triomphe is an interesting pointer to the progress of aviation. The Mail's prize for a cross-Channel flight, won by Blériot in 1909, was £1,000; in 1910 they awarded Paulhan £10,000 for flying from London to Manchester; in 1919 they awarded Alcock and Brown £10,000 for flying the Atlantic. It is true that £10,000 to-day is worth a quarter what it was in 1919, but it is odd to reflect that, nominally at least, the problem of getting rapidly from the centre of London to the centre of Paris is now rated equal with the problem of flying from America to Europe. In 1979, if they have £10,000 to spare then, they might offer it to the man who can travel the fastest from Cromwell Road to London Airport.

Mine These Waters!

I SUPPOSE a lot of people thought the Italians were fussing about nothing last week when they got worried over Mr. Khrushchev's visit to Albania—"less than fifty miles away," as one report said, "at the narrowest point of the Straits of Otranto." And Turin's *La Stampa* expressed apprehension at the length of his proposed visit. Thirteen days. "One cannot easily see how so many days can be filled . . ." Italy can hardly be blamed for its nerves. Thirteen days with Mr. K. poised across the water. This is the sort of thing that puts paid to any Distant Early Warning system. No doubt a rocket leaving Russia for Rome would register a useful radar blip, but how many Civil Defence men are going to be caught napping if the incalculable Muscovite swims over as a one-man commando and blows up Otranto town hall?

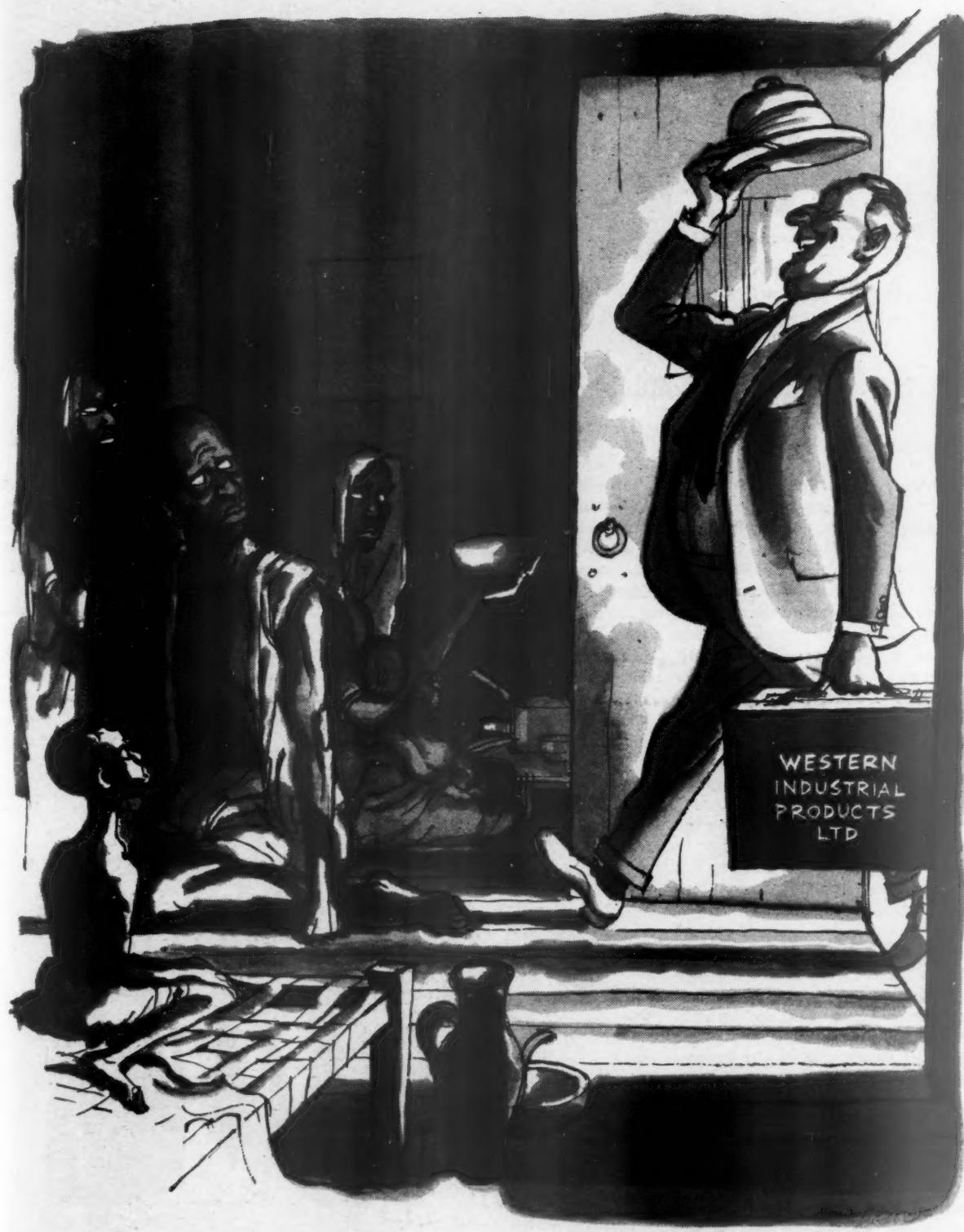
Sprinkling of Truth

No doubt the president of the National Association of Funeral Directors was strictly accurate the other day when he said "Hearses are not dust-carts." They've got the makings, though.

—MR. PUNCH

BY ROCKING-CHAIR ACROSS RUSSIA

A new series of travelogues by ALEX ATKINSON starts on page 761



"Good morning, can I interest you in anything?"
"Yes—capital."



A series of articles in which notable schools in fiction are revisited and reconsidered



ONCE AGAIN ASSEMBLED HERE

3 Eric; or Much of a Muchness by ARTHUR MARSHALL

ROSLYN School on an afternoon of high summer! My pen is inadequate indeed to do justice to the matchless beauty of it all—the tall, stately buildings, the majestic lines of the laundry (Togger to each and every Roslynite), the daisy-dappled greensward, and the golden sunlight that fell like a benison through the ambrosial foliage of the limes, their pale blossoms murmurous with bees. In their grateful shade Eric Williams, in jeans and a T-shirt, was idly flipping through the school library copy of *Lolita*. Yawning loudly, he tossed the book to his friend, Montagu.

"Here you are, Hank. It all seems pretty old hat to me."

Oh Eric, Eric! You, a youth on the threshold of life, already a prey to ennui? The nuclear age holds such a wealth of treasures to cherish and admire. Look about you, boy! Look up, look down, look sideways, look out! Oh Eric, Eric!

"Good Lord! What's the old man doing here?"

A portly figure was approaching. Dr. Rowlands was paying one of his rare visits to the school. As befits a modern educationalist, the headmaster expended the major part of his time on the public weal. No TV showing of *Come Again* was complete without his pleasant sincerity and weighty scholarship. He was the bulwark, nay, the main stanchion of *What Am I Holding?* on the radio. There were Brains Trusts here and symposia there, on all of which he lavished the rich fruits of his cultivated taste. The selfless activity

brought him publicity, fame even. It also brought him fees.

In matters scholastic the Doctor was something of a visionary. Irksome restrictions had been well-nigh abolished, dress was optional, classes voluntary, and the headmaster and Mrs. Rowlands delighted in being "Jumbo" and "Sybil" to all but the most junior.

Pausing to shake off two fourth-formers who were clamouring for autographs, Dr. Rowlands sauntered towards the tree-girt pair.

"Ah, Eric and Hank. How nice."

"Good heavens, Jumbo, we thought you were at Lime Grove."

"No. That's to-morrow. I've just nipped down for the day to see how the Appeal is coming along. How right we were to ask for £600,000. It looks well. The higher the sum, the better the school."

Old Roslynites in all corners of the globe had been circulated and right nobly had they answered the call. Cheques, postal-orders, and books of stamps, some of them unused, had poured in from hill-station and bungalow, from igloo and wigwam, each



"Meet Gillespie—Classics."



loyal alumnus counting it a joyous task to help restore, embellish, and, in certain cases, demolish-chosen sections of the beloved fabric.

"Yes. It seems to be going pretty well. £8,992 to date. It begins to look as though Sybil can get started on her new wing. We're a bit cramped, you know. The Bishop has to share our bathroom. A bishop oughtn't really to have to share anything. Well, I must get on with some work," and away he strolled to his study, emerging shortly after to fix a notice upon the door: DO NOT DISTURB. ANSWERING FAN-MAIL.

Scarcely had he gone when a slight figure in a neat dark blue pin-stripe could be espied hastening purposefully towards Williams and Montagu, the sunlight glinting fiercely on the polished horn-rims.

"God! Here's that ghastly little drip, Russell."

"Oh Eric, Eric, thank goodness I've found you."

"Well, Russell?"

"Do please call me Edwin."

"I can't. It's such a bloody silly name. What do you want?"

Russell's pained eyes fell for a moment on *Lolita* and, colouring instantly, he looked hastily away.

"Well, Eric, I was just now on my way to extra coaching with Mr. Rose for the Moulding Bursary. It's at Keble, you know, and only open to intending ordinands. And I saw your brother, poor little Verny . . ."

"His name's Vernon."

"Vernon, then. I saw him with—with Ball."

I hurry over a part of my narrative inconceivably painful. Tremble, tremble, reader, at the name of Ball! Ball, he whose vile influence was spreading like some noisome grey lichen over those hallowed walls that weren't too flaky to take it. Ball, the forefront fighter in the devil's battle, he of the mean disposition and feeble intellect. Down on your knees, reader, and pray, pray for Ball!

"Well, I don't care what friends Vernon chooses to make. I think he's done rather well, actually. Ball's

father's at Harwell. He might be able to wangle something decent for us when we leave."

Oh Eric, Eric! Art thou not thy brother's keeper, guardian (while thy parents are in Bermuda) of those baby lips, that pure young heart? Thoughtfulness for others—this lesson, worldly boy, thou shouldest have learnt at thy mother's knee, if thy mother's knee had ever been anywhere but under a Canasta table.

"Oh, don't just stand there gaping, Russell. Clear out!"

The saintly youth, whose heart clave to Eric, pouted and withdrew.

"Hormones all wrong," vouchsafed Montagu, the knowledgeable. "I rather wonder if a change of sex isn't his answer, though I doubt if Matron is quite up to the injections. I sort of see him as a deaconess."

Proximity to the sea ensured a plentiful fish diet for the Roslynites—cod in many palatable guises, kippers, and an occasional smelt. It was through a nutritious haze of haddock fumes that Mr. Rose, the master on duty, addressed

CHESTNUT GROVE

J. H. Dowd, best remembered for his drawings of children, contributed to Punch between 1913 and 1948



Boy. "PLEASE, TEACHER, WHAT DID I LEARN TO-DAY?"
 Teacher. "THAT'S A PECULIAR QUESTION."
 Boy. "WELL, THEY'LL ASK ME WHEN I GET HOME."

April 17th, 1929

the boys prior to grace at supper that evening.

"Attention, please. Attlay, will you kindly put down that cruet. Now, it has come to my notice that some of you juniors have been utilizing the flush-toilet in the study passage, thus seriously incommoding its rightful occupants. This detestable practice will cease forthwith and all who have been so offending are to come and report themselves to me in my lounge this evening. *Benedictus benedicat.* Stand up the boy who threw that roll."

"Lounge! Toilet!" expostulated Eric. "Where the hell did Jumbo get these ruddy second-rate ushers from?"; while little Verny, egged on by the infamous Ball and with his cherubic face alight with mischief and merriment, darted from the room and scratched ROSE is NON-U all over the forbidden walls.

Nobody owned up to the roll-

throwing, and though the constable had appeared to come from Ball's direction Mr. Rose had not the spirit left to accuse him, though in his younger days he would have won the respect of all by hurling his bicycle-clips at the offender. But it was long, weary years since he had answered Dr. Rowlands' tempting advertisement in the *Morning Post* ("Master required to teach in recognized boys' school. Salary") and only the knowledge of his high calling, and the need to eat, had sustained him through his battle with headstrong youth.

Labour on, Walter Rose! Labour on, though the soil seem barren and the seed sterile. On, Walter, on! There's a pension, meagre though it be, at the end of it.

As Eric was leaving the dining-room a loving hand was placed on his shoulder

"Eric, dear Eric!"

"Oh for God's sake stop pawing me about, Russell. What is it now?"

"Oh Eric, Eric, I grieve for you."

"Mind your own blasted business."

"To see you thus, careless of your brother's welfare. Where, where is the mould of stainless honour in which I thought you cast? And though I grieve, there is one who grieves even more," said Edwin, pointing reverently upwards.

"What? Harley? You must be mad!" riposted Eric, the astrophysics master being known to inhabit poky quarters on the floor above.

"No, no, no. You deliberately misunderstand me."

"Oh, put a sock in it, you little wet."

Stung, and sad beyond measure or telling at the ill-merited retort, Russell, a keen marine biologist, flung from the room and out through the Baldwin Memorial Gates and down on to the shore. His ears dulled by the mingled scream of weltering tempest and planken wave, he stood for a space admiring the translucent pools, the audacious crabs. Anemones were the devout boy's especial interest and he never seemed to tire of watching the crimson sea-flowers waving their long tentacula. Recking little of the water that squelched its way into his ankle supports, Edwin set off briskly in quest of a white plumosa. And the holy lad fully forgave in his heart all Eric's coldness.

It is well that he did! It is well, indeed! Come back, Edwin, come back! The sea is rising, boy, and that way disaster lies. Come back, I say again! Does he hear? No, alas! he does not. He squelches on.

"Eric, dear, you're looking a bit off colour." Thus Mrs. Rowlands, in roomy rust-hued slacks, encountering Eric outside the prefects' telly room.

"Oh, I'm O.K. thanks, Mrs. Rowlands."

"Let it be Sybil, dear, *please.*"

Eric flushed with pleasure.

"I haven't seen anything of you for ages, dear. You've been quite neglecting me. And Jumbo's off again to-morrow." She sighed and toyed for a moment with the giant cairngorm at her breast. "Do come along for a chat some afternoon, and I'll give you digestives, and tea, and—er—sympathy."

Now, Eric, now or never! This is it, lad! Speak out! Tell her that you don't care all that much about digestives!

"Thanks very much, Sybil. I'd love to."

"Oh, goody!"

Some two hours later the head boy knocked at Dr. Rowlands' drawing-room door.

"What is it, Jeremy? As you see, I'm rather busy."

"I thought I'd better just let you know, Jumbo, that Russell's got himself cut off on the Stack."

This forbidding mass of isolated schist was an impressive feature of Roslyn Bay.

"What a little pest! But is the Stack totally immersed at high tide?"

"All but ten feet of it."

"In that case, what are we worrying about?" boomed the Doctor genially. "Russell may find himself a surprised winner of the Rumbould Physical Endurance Chalice. Why, I might even get him an interview on *Tonight*. Now then, four diamonds doubled, is it? Down you go, partner."

Mrs. Rowlands, a proud dummy, spread her hand.

"Really, Sybil! Where are the two quick tricks?"

"Oh dear! I thought my void in clubs . . ."

"Bosh!" said the Doctor loudly, revealing for a pleasing moment the man behind the cathode-ray tube.

Russell's funeral took place the following Friday, the mournful event being somewhat hurried on so as not to form an inconvenient clash with Saturday's fixture against the Midland Bank.

Weep for him, Eric, weep for him! In salt tears, freely and sincerely shed, thou mayst wipe away thy indifference and neglect of this thy loving, pure young friend. Be not afraid, boy. Manly tears are no disgrace. Generals have been known to weep, when the reviewers were spiteful. Shed them, dear muddled lad, shed them.

And that night Eric's pillow was wet. A sudden storm, aided by an open window, had completely soured the freshly laundered napery.

Other contributors to this series will be:

RICHARD FINDLATER
STELLA GIBBONS
JOHN RAYMOND
GWYN THOMAS

As the big periodical-publishing houses buy one another up, the day may soon arrive when there will be nothing on the bookstalls but

The Daily Mirabelle (incorporating the Newnes of the World)

By B. A. YOUNG

IT would be absurdly optimistic to expect a firm publishing *Marylou*, *Teenage* and *Girls' Elvis* not to take in a bit of slack after buying the firm publishing *Miranda*, *Bobbysox* and *Girls' Cliff*. When Odhams take over Newnes (having already taken over Hulton's), they and the *Daily Mirror* (with which is incorporated the Amalgamated Press) will control an overwhelmingly large slice of the periodical market, and they are bound to clear their decks a bit before sailing into the circulation war.

It would obviously be a mistake for them to close down prosperous papers,

even if they are in direct competition, but there is plenty of room for imaginative rationalization in other directions. Odhams, for instance, who are already the publishers of *Debrett's Peerage*, have now become the owners of Newnes's *Tit-Bits*, and these could easily be merged in such a way as to bring in a host of new readers to each, while investing *Debrett* with a popular slant it has hitherto lacked on the whole.

Consider the rather flat entry for Lord Exe:

EXE, BARON (Berkeley-Claridge-Dorchester) [Baron, UK, 1067], George Berkeley-



"Business is terrible."

Claridge-Dorchester, 31st Baron, b. 20 Jan., 1912, s. 23 Mar. 1940, ed. Eton; served Grenadier Guards 1939-1946 (Captain); publications, "My Life and Times," "Eton Days and Eton Ways."

Arms. Party per pale, baron and femme, 1st, or, a chevron sanguine, 2nd, barry wavy of six argent and azure. Crest, a lion's head erased gules. Supporters, on either side a pig proper gorged or. Motto, *Quae Cum Ita Sint.*

UNCLE LIVING (son of 29th Baron) . . . and so forth.

This will never do for the wider public. There is plenty of news-value in the story, but it hasn't been brought out at all. In *Peer Stories* (incorporating *Debrett* and *Tit-Bits*) we shall have this:

UNCLE LIVING!

What a surprise it was for George Berkeley-Claridge-Dorchester, thirty-first in the glamorous line of the barony of Exe, when he found that his Uncle Philip, second son of the twenty-ninth baron, was living in a manor-house not a hundred miles from his own castle!

Or perhaps this:

MYSTERY OF THE LION'S HEAD

Who erased the lion's head in the arms of handsome Old Etonian man-about-Chelsea George Berkeley-Claridge-Dorchester, thirty-first Baron Exe?

Experts in heraldry have been trying to solve this strange mystery for the past nine centuries.

Or possibly this:

THE SUPPORTERS WERE GORGED

Supporters of Lord Exe's coat-of-arms were reported yesterday to be proper gorged or. This was no surprise to those in the know, for Lord Exe's supporters are both pigs!

Man in Apron

by Larry



This will put up the sales of *Debrett* to a figure never dreamed of before, and what is more it will give it the element of democratic heartiness proper to a stable-companion of the *Daily Herald* and the *People*.

Similar opportunities will come the way of the *Daily Mirror* group. Among the *bonnes bouches* that fell to them when they took over the Amalgamated Press was Kelly's Directories. It is too much to expect a publisher with as firm a belief in the value of forty-eight-point sans-serif capitals as the *Daily Mirror* to put up for long with this sort of thing:

THREADNEEDLE GARDENS

- 1-7 Hartnell's Stores, Ltd.
- 9 Creed, Mrs. D.
- 11 Amies, H.
- 13 Stiebel, Mrs. V.
- 15 Cavanagh, Rev. J.
-here is Thimble Street.....
- 17 Dressmakers' Arms
- 19 Roger, N.

It's so easy to give it life:

SHE DEFIED THE HOODOO ON HER HOUSE

Tiny eighty-six-year-old Mrs. Veronica Stiebel laughed when her neighbours suggested she should change the number of her house. "I've lived here for seventy years," she quipped, "and never had bad luck yet."

Why did the neighbours want to see the number changed?

Mrs. Stiebel's house is Number Thirteen!

Mr. Harold Amies, a railway worker, lives on one side of her, at Number Eleven, and Father Jack Cavanagh on the other, at Number Fifteen.



Of course it is all going to take up much more space, but that will be all to the publishers' advantage. No one will be absolutely certain when the reference he wants will appear. "Are you in next week's *True Directories*?" they will ask. "Don't miss it!" There may even be a revival of those grand old self-binding covers we used to have to assemble the constituent parts of the works of Sir John Hammerton and Arthur Mee.

It all looks like being very exciting for the reading public, and the reading public had better make the most of it while it lasts. If the Institute of Directors is right, both Odhams and the *Daily Mirror* fall to be nationalized when the next Labour Government takes office. The outlook for the mass periodical publishers will get really peculiar then.



"Mr. Geoffrey Waite, 34, prospective Conservative candidate for Loughborough, suggested this week-end, after returning from a 30-hour 'fact-finding expedition,' on which he acted as lorry driver's mate that a survey could be made of transport cafés."

Daily Telegraph

No home-cooking?



Geneva Jingle

The Russians to-day once again refused to agree to technical studies on underground tests and the relation of the Nevada seismic data to a veto-free inspection quota."

—Manchester Guardian

NOT the most enchanting diva
With an aria could be cuter
Than a Russian at Geneva,
The professional disputer.

Some slight yielding, as a starter?
No, he'll budge not one iota:
Any sanctified-by-charter
Veto-free inspection quota

Must ignore (the ultimata,
Though polite, get no politer)
The Nevada seismic data.
Prospects of a deal are slighter . . .

— RICHARD MALLETT



"We can never get him interested in our break-out plans."

Portrait of An Industrialist

By H. F. ELLIS

THE opportunities are limitless, boundless," the man said.

"Right to the top and beyond, given the right qualities. But you can't find 'em. One in a hundred has it, and then you're lucky. As soon as I see him I take him on—like *that*."

He was youngish, not more than the early thirties, and came from somewhere in Cheshire.

"What sort of qualities," I began, "do you look for when—?"

"Look for!" he said. "It's *there*. Either it's there or it isn't. As soon as they come in, usually. When a man means to succeed—a young man who wants to work and get ahead, get *on*—he shows it. Unmistakable. Competent

dead-beats though, most of them, hoping for a couple of thousand before they're forty."

"When you say 'get on,'" I asked, "what do you mean exactly? Make money?"

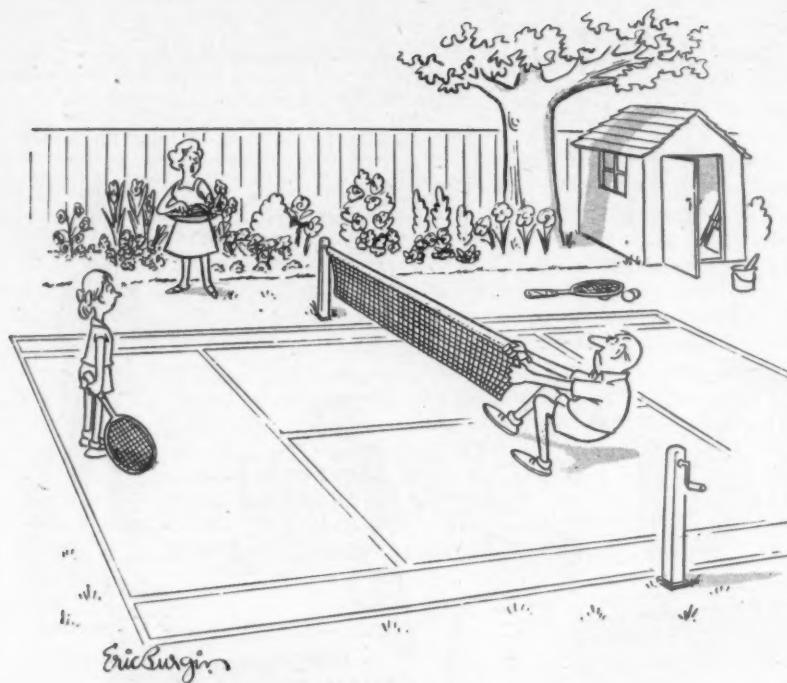
"What else?"

"For himself? Or for the firm? What I mean is, do you want him simply to be out for his own success, or do you want the sort of man who will get wrapped up in the interests of the business, of whatever it is you—?"

"Steel," the man said. "When he's working hard for himself he's working hard for me. I give him all the responsibility he can take. Right from the start. If he's fit to get ahead he's got

to be given the chance. Otherwise he'd go. Pack up. If he didn't he'd be no use to me. A man who's kept down and stays ought to be sacked."

He didn't bark any of this out, or stab his forefinger at me as you might suppose. He just sat there in the comfortable lounge-bar of the small Welsh inn, with his slippers feet crossed in front of him, gently tilting the whisky to and fro in his glass and speaking in the quiet, unemphatic voice with which, I dare say, he would clinch a hundred-thousand-pound deal or dismiss an executive who wasn't ambitious enough to dismiss himself. A good deal of his time, he had told me, was spent in aeroplanes—to Rotterdam,



to Turin, to Stuttgart, and of course to Canada and the U.S.A. Once a week at least he'd run down to London, by car if he could spare the time or wanted to call in at Scunthorpe or Bedford.

"When you're away half the time," he said, "you want people behind you who will take decisions and like it, not a crowd of better-wait-till-he-gets-back boys."

It was my turn to buy a drink and I bought him a large one, taking the decision myself and liking it. I did not want to hear him say "What else?" again. His eyes, when he turned them on you, were a hard, vivid blue, not staring exactly, not exactly fanatical, but capable, you felt, of summing up a dead-beat instantaneously.

"These young management men of yours," I said, "the ones you want who are simply out for their own careers, for more important jobs, more money, bigger cars—is that right?—well, isn't there a risk that they will do you down when it suits them? Push off to a rival firm, say, and sell your trade secrets? There was a book by Marquand, *Sincerely, Willis Wayde* it was called or thereabout—"

He wasn't interested in Marquand.

"They'd be fools if they didn't," he said. "Good luck to them. As long as I give them what *they* want, and they give me what *I* want, they'll stay. I've got to keep a jump ahead of them, that's all."

It seemed an extraordinary world to me. I don't know that I ever met an industrialist before, except in books. This one did not match up to any pre-conceived idea. He had no bulge at the back of the neck, no bluff Yorkshire manner, no line of talk about grouse or salmon. I had a sudden new vision of the north teeming with such spare, tireless, irresistible men, determined to come out on top, but equally determined to be surrounded by other men determined to come out on top too. No desire for an "Eclipse first, the rest nowhere" existence.

"That's the way it goes," he said. "That's the way it *has* to go. It's men who are out for themselves, first and all the time, who make a business hum. It's better for everybody. There's more money all round. Up go the profits. Up goes the standard of living, if you like."

I did my best to despise him. All his values were wrong. No culture. Never heard of Marquand, as likely as not.

Just a money-chaser, in a world where a man's income was the only gauge of success or failure. But it wasn't easy. Rotterdam, Stuttgart, Turin. Driving a hard bargain with the Dutch on Monday. Off to see Krupp on Wednesday. With perhaps a quick trip to Scunthorpe in between. Get me Rome, Miss Walters. Fix the conference for ten-thirty sharp. Forty-eight-and-a-half is my final offer, and tell those three competent dead-beats the vacancy is filled. Mathieson will have to go to Warsaw; I want Finlay with me in Quebec . . . What precisely, in the interests of self-esteem, had one got to put against that?

He excused himself to make a telephone call, and I heard him arranging to have the Bentley pick him up at seven-thirty on Monday morning. The trouble with that man, I told myself, is that he is a slave to his own ambition. He has no idea how to use life, how to get the best out of it. He is an egotist and a Philistine. Probably never opened a book by—well, Jane Austen, say, in his life. Narrow, self-sufficient—surely one could not feel inferior to a North-country industrialist?

On the other hand, *somebody* had to meet Krupp. A fat lot of good it would be, quoting *Pride and Prejudice* to Krupp. I thought about the whole rich background of a classical education, which this man undoubtedly had lacked. I let my mind dwell on all the great plays and paintings which, if I had not actually seen, I was at least better equipped than this one-track steelman to appreciate when I did get round to them. I played with the phrase "a life of letters." But none of it did me any good. The terrible, disloyal thought came into my mind that, when this man asked me (as he undoubtedly would) what *I* did for a living, I would give anything to be able to say I controlled a huge fleet of oil-tankers. "The trouble with Onassis," I wanted to say . . .

He never did ask me, actually. He had summed me up, I suppose, instantaneously.



"An underground station being built in Leningrad will not have platforms—because the trains will not have drivers . . . Passengers will use recesses in the walls . . ." *Birmingham Mail*

Oh, so they're having those?

For Whom the Bell Tolls

By SIMON RAVEN

From: *The Telephone Manager, Churchill Buildings, Norcaster, Norsex*
To: *Nicholas Quinn, Esq., The Cottage, Felix-Juxta-Silvam, Norsex*

May 21st, 1974

DEAR SIR,—I notice that you are one of the very few householders in Norsex still to be without a telephone. I should like to point out to you that there is no longer any shortage of telephonic facilities, and to say that we should be glad to install an instrument for you at an early date. Could you kindly confirm that it will be convenient for our team to visit your house between 10 and 11 a.m. on Tuesday, June 1st?

Yours faithfully,

T. CRABB

Telephone Manager

From: *Nicholas Quinn, Felix-Juxta-Silvam*
To: *The Telephone Manager, Norcaster*

May 23rd, 1974

DEAR SIR,—With reference to your letter of May 21st, had I wished for a telephone in my house I should have asked for one. However, I thank you for your inquiries and should be obliged if you would now abandon any notion of installing a telephone at this address.

Yours faithfully,

NICHOLAS QUINN

From: *The Telephone Manager.*
To: *Nicholas Quinn, Esq.*

May 27th, 1974

DEAR MR. QUINN,—Thank you for your letter of May 23rd. I am sorry to see that you don't want a telephone, but hope that you will change your mind if I tell you something of the new services offered to subscribers.

Quite apart from such long established amenities as the Speaking Clock and the recorded Weather Forecasts, it is now possible to receive: (1) A running live commentary on activities in both Houses of Parliament. (2) Immediate advice from an expert on any aspect of the Public Services (Health, Adult Education, Communal Holidays, etc., etc.). (3) A brief résumé, repeated at two-minute intervals, of the engagements of all members of the Royal Family for the following day.

To turn to more everyday matters. I understand that you are a writer and make your living from works of fiction and occasional journalism of a superior kind. Surely, in the fast-moving world of to-day, it is essential that you should be immediately available to receive the instructions of your publishers and editors?

I suggest June 7th as the day on which we might install your new telephone. Kindly confirm that this is convenient.

Yours faithfully,

T. CRABB

Telephone Manager

From: *Nicholas Quinn*
To: *The Telephone Manager*

May 29th, 1974

DEAR SIR,—I have your letter of May 27th.

I find the services you describe more nauseating than I had thought possible. My interests are well served by the decent and leisurely processes of the public mail.

I do not want a telephone on June 7th—or ever.

NICHOLAS QUINN

From: *The Telephone Manager*

June 1st, 1974

SIR,—In view of the tone of your letter dated May 29th, I must now remind you that it is the enforceable obligation of every citizen to make himself readily available should officials, in any of their numerous capacities, have need to contact him; and that therefore, in accordance with the



"Commie! Chinese-type Commie!"

Communications Act introduced by the Socialist Government of 1965, all Telephone Managers are empowered to direct the compulsory installation of the telephone in any household. In your own case, I am instructed by Local Departments that your attitude to Income Tax, National Insurance Contributions, Compulsory Suffrage and National Celebrations (Mandatory) has always been unsatisfactory and evasive. I therefore have no hesitation in using my powers, and in telling you that our team will call on June 10th.

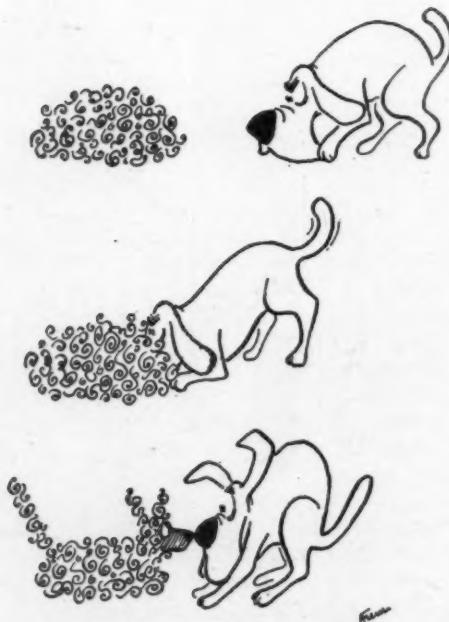
T. CRABB
Telephone Manager

To: *The Editor of The Times* June 12th, 1974
SIR,—Entirely against my wishes the local authorities have installed in my house a telephone. Their action is apparently justified by something called the Communications Act of 1965. I write to inquire whether any of your readers has been subjected to a similar indignity and whether there is any means of appeal.

Yours faithfully,
Felix-Juxta-Silvam NICHOLAS QUINN

To: *The Editor of The Times* June 14th, 1974
SIR,—We the undersigned write to protest against the gross violation of elementary liberties in the case of Mr. Nicholas Quinn. The Communications Act of 1965, or rather that section of it which has been invoked in this case, was plainly intended to make it possible for officials to maintain easy contact with the aged and infirm in outlying districts. It was not suggested that the Act should be used for the persecution of distinguished men of letters.

We are, sir,
Yours, etc.,
House of Lords ANNAN, BOOTHBY,
BOWRA, SPARROW



To: *The Editor of The Times*

June 16th, 1974

SIR,—It is a sad comment on the age that so distinguished a company of public men should have written, in your columns of June 14th, to support Mr. N. Quinn's frivolous and anti-social protest against the installation of a telephone. Despite their Lordships' loose interpretation of the Communications Act of 1965, it has long been clear that the *universal enforcement* of the Act could be of the greatest benefit to the nation.

Yours faithfully,

A—B—, B—C—,
C—D—, D—E—,
E—F—, F—G—,
etc., etc. (Fifty signatures)

House of Commons

From: *The Editor*, "Re-Affirmation," 12 Lewisham Mews,
S.W.9

To: *Nicholas Quinn, Esq.* June 25th, 1974

DEAR NICHOLAS,—I see from *The Times* that you are now on the telephone. But whenever I ring your number I get no answer. Why is this? Surely you haven't taken to spending the whole day in healthy rambles?

Yours, ever,

HUGH

Felix-Juxta-Silvam

June 27th

MY DEAR HUGH,—Of course you get no answer from my telephone. Maddened by the nagging of duns and bureaucrats, I determined to sabotage the thing. At first I just left the receiver off the hook—but the operator merely made a foul noise down it to recall my sense of duty. Then I cut the wires, but someone came and mended them within twenty-four hours. It seems, however, that if the machine rings properly and you just don't answer, there is nothing *they* can do. But that still leaves one with the racket it makes when it rings. Mercifully mine has its bell inside it. So I filled an old hat-box with cotton wool, made a slit for the wire to go through, and dumped the telephone inside. I then made another slit for the wire in an old packing-case, put the hat-box in the bottom, covered it with shavings and three Army blankets, and nailed the whole concern hard down. So now it can ring till it chokes, I hear nothing, and *they* have no excuse for coming to interfere. Though I expect they'll think of something before long.

Love,

NICHOLAS

Extract from *The Times* of July 5th, 1974

"Mr. Nicholas Quinn, author of *Droop, Dahlias*, *In My Window-Box* and other novels, was found dead yesterday morning in his cottage at Felix-Juxta-Silvam. Mr. Quinn had apparently suffered a minor form of heart attack, the effects of which were rendered fatal by delay in summoning a doctor and his own unavailing efforts to open a large nailed packing-case which he was still clutching when he was found. The packing-case was later opened and a telephone in good working order was found at the bottom of it. A post office spokesman commented: "There was no need for Mr. Quinn to keep his telephone in a packing-case. We have a special Hire-Purchase Scheme whereby subscribers can obtain telephone tables, complete with attachments to hold directories and an erasable pad."



'Want me to mention the weather for Saturday's cricket?'

Pep Talk in a Broiler Factory

IT has been recorded that about twenty generations ago, in 1954, before we broilers of Britain became a well-disciplined, systematic industry, our ancestors used to live in an uncontrolled environment; "out of doors."

The pioneer broilers of that era used to wander haphazardly for considerable distances, getting their food in farm-yards and wherever else they could find it. Sometimes they didn't eat as much as they wanted and they became what was known as "hungry." Remember them, when the red lights go out for our next period of sleep-growth and we rest with our crops full of meal enriched with vitamins.

How our ancestors would have marvelled at our concentration and well-being to-day! As I speak, there are nine thousand six hundred of us gathered here in an area of four thousand eight hundred square feet—one of us in every half square foot! Equality, fraternity, togetherness! How the birds of old, in the precariousness and competitiveness of their erratic ways, always quick to tear one another with beak and spur, would have envied us our tranquil mutual propinquity, in dryness and warmth, around our bountiful, rust-proof, automatic electric brooders, in the sedative dim glow of our electric sun, and in the security of cinder-blocks, fibre-glass and corrugated asbestos! Is it any wonder that our population has

By
PATRICK SKENE CATLING

increased so wonderfully in the past five years? There were only 3,000,000 broilers in 1954. Last year there were 75,000,000. I have the highest hopes for even better statistics for 1959.

Our standard of living is higher than ever before. Our wood shavings are clean. The premature death date by disease is only 2 per cent. I am happy to be able to report that there have been very few recent cases of feather-picking, ammonia blindness, panic and cannibalism.

You have heard that the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has protested in our name against alleged cruelty to broilers. I'm sure that all of us, if given the chance, would have endorsed the response made by Commander Ian Hughes, chairman of the poultry committee of the National Farmers' Union, when he pointed out that "Broilers are not human." He said we were content here, eating and sleeping—and so we are! He said he has plans to make our life even better, by installing apparatus that will medicate the air as well as cleaning it and drying it and maintaining it at a constant temperature of sixty-five degrees. As you all know, Commander Hughes has already made it easier for broilers to achieve maturity more efficiently. Our ancestors used to have

to live for seventy-seven days before they were fit to be dressed; but in to-day's improved conditions, my friends, we need only seventy days. Commander Hughes has predicted that we may soon be able to cut the time still shorter—an inspiring challenge, I'm sure all of us agree.

What, then, of the future? Commander Hughes has assured visitors that the future of our kind is bright with promise. When the visitors admired the plumpness of our breasts, the trim daintiness of our legs, and the paleness of our complexions, he assured them that careful selective breeding will exaggerate all these aristocratic characteristics. Not many years hence, if we all co-operate to the utmost of our ability, eating and sleeping ever more intensively and refraining from absolutely all unnecessary exercise, if present tendencies can be further developed—and I feel confident they can—the British broiler of to-morrow may not resemble the old-fashioned chicken at all.

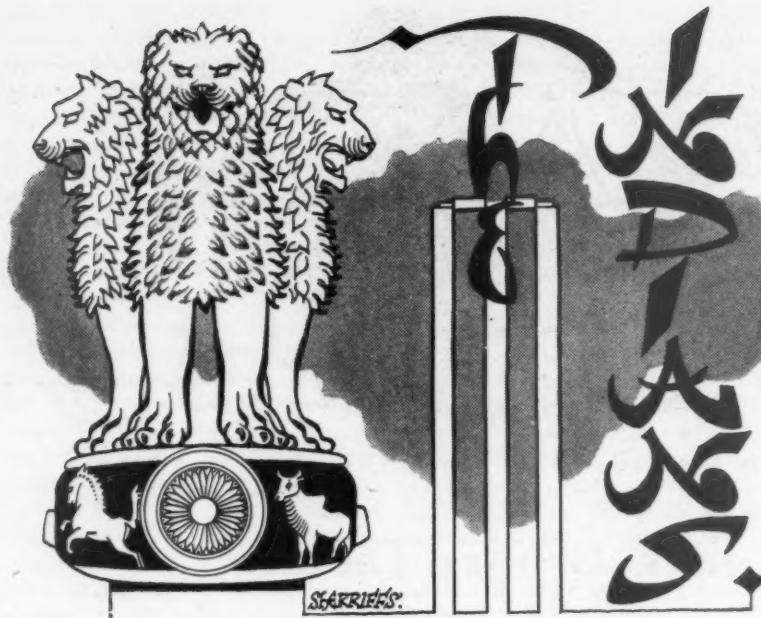
★

"DIFFICULT

Originally, the electrification of the London, Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool services was a 10-year project, due for completion in 1948. Now British Railways hope to finish the work several years earlier, probably by 1963."

Birmingham Mail

That's planning.



Hard Passage for India

The First Test begins at Trent Bridge on June 4

MY first contact with Indian cricket was through a magnificent photograph that hung in a gloomy passage in the ancestral home. This passage led to the front door and through it, I suppose, a certain amount of everyday commerce passed, but to me it was a sort of Long Room dedicated to cricket. There was a Victorian umbrella-stand full of cricket bats in various stages of senility, a barometer with a cracked glass, and sundry pictures of cricket elevens featuring my grandfather and my father. The Indian photograph showed twenty-two cricketers, two umpires, half a dozen officials and several small boys—eleven brown-skinned tourists all trying to look like Prince Ranjitsinhji, eleven paler figures trying to look like Dr. W. G. Grace or C. B. Fry, two umpires looking unmistakably like umpires. It

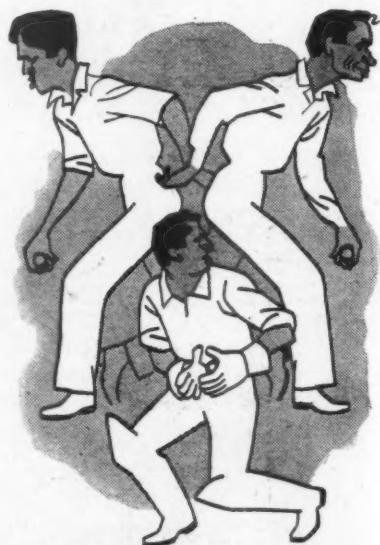
was dated somewhere between 1905 and 1910.

I loved this photograph. I liked the fierce moustaches, the high-lapelled blazers, the little caps, the tall celluloid collars and splendid watch-chains of the officials, the skeleton pads, the varnished bats... Above all I admired the way two men in the front of the group were arranged, lying on their sides and elbows as in Dod Proctor's "Morning."

My next encounter with the Indians was in August 1936, immediately before the Oval Test—a match which I have always regarded as Hollowood's Match. What happened was that I accompanied an Indian doctor to London on the eve of the game and that this cricketing fanatic must rush from Euston to Marylebone just before midnight—with me in tow—to pay his respects to his fellow countryman and wish them luck for the morrow.



When C. K. Nayudu came to the door of his hotel bedroom in his night-shirt, rubbing pleasant dreams from his eyes and looking desperately unhappy, I had the decency to shrink behind my medical friend, who introduced himself at length through the complications of an Indian Tree pattern pedigree. Nayudu was charming. He should have slammed the door in the doctor's face: he didn't. Instead he invited us in and listened politely and sleepily to a long rigmarole about Indian policy, the rising power of Hitler and the need for extreme care when playing the new ball. To my undying regret I made no move to end the interview and I watched play next morning convinced that I had won the last Test while betraying the spirit of cricket. Hammond, I remember, hit up 217, Worthington 128, while the burly Nissar toiled for 5 for 120. C. K. Nayudu, I thought, looked listless in the field. I still think that he would have made two hundred (instead



C.G. BORDE

M.S. TAHMANE

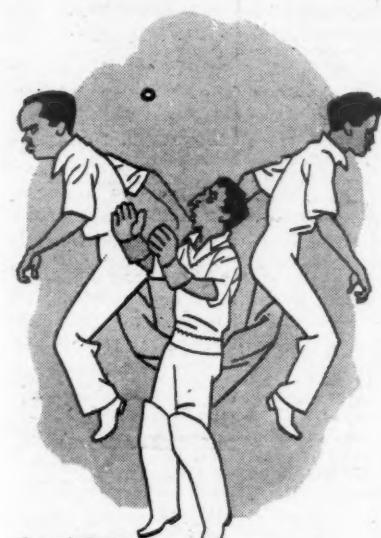
R.G. NADKARNI

of a mere 81) but for our unpardonable intrusion upon his health-and-beauty sleep.

In 1945 I supported Attlee, Bevin and Cripps when they decided to create two countries of Test Match status out of one by partitioning the Indian sub-continent. I still think that this was a move of great statesmanship, and I doubt whether the M.C.C. have

yet been given the credit they deserve for their subtle behind-the-scenes prompting. Let me remind crusty old Empire Loyalists and such that Pakistan's victories against West Indies last winter would have been impossible without the spade work of that cricketing genius Clem Attlee.

This summer the Indians are here in force and with a most difficult assignment. The British public expects them



S.P. GUPTE

R.G. JOSHI

K.B. DESAL

to do two things—to restore the fortunes lost by May's men in Australia, and to revive the reputation of India lost during the Trueman blitz of 1952 and in the recent series against West Indies. So they must win for India, lose for England, play brighter cricket for cricket generally, disport themselves with model modesty and at the same time provide enough "incidents" to keep the swarming columnists reasonably affronted.

Dattajeroo K. Gaekwad's team has already been written off by most Indian and many English critics. It is supposed to be the largest collection of butter-fingered non-benders ever assembled for international duty. The batting is supposed to be extremely suspect against fast bowling, and the bowling exceptionally weak in the arts of swing. Only in one department is it acknowledged that the tourists have the edge on their opponents—in leg-break

and googly bowling—and remembering what Benaud did to May's men it may well be that this department will prove decisive.

Four of the team bowl leg-spinners, Gupte, Borde, Ghorpade and the captain, and S. P. Gupte is reported to be the best of his type now trundling. His—and Benaud's—success has already had its effect on team selection in England: everywhere, from the counties down to the greens, cricketers are being encouraged to try their wrist at the leg-break, and as a result more long hops are being smacked to the tea-tent than for many a year. In one village with which I am acquainted an elderly gentleman long retired from the game has been tempted back into flannels by the promise of "an occasional spell at the rectory end against the rabbits" and is acquitted himself surprisingly well. His most deadly ball, unquestionably, is his "bosie," a ball that drops like a stone from his wrist and scuttles crabwise in the general direction of the batsman. Who misses it.

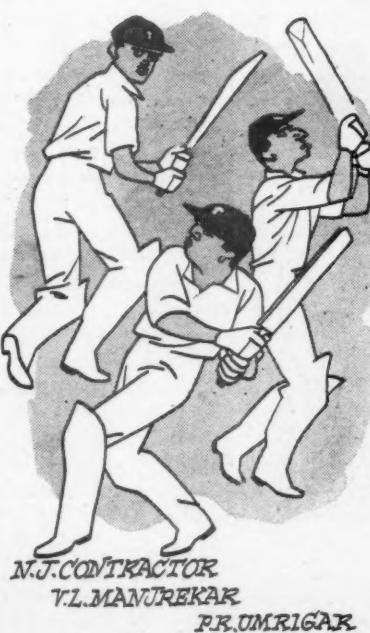
Umrigar, Roy, Manjrekar, Nadkarni, Kripal Singh, Joshi, Jaisimha, Ghorpade,

Contractor, Borde, Apte and Gaekwad are known to be capable batsmen against everything except top-class fast bowling. But does the England team still boast top-class fast bowlers? Statham, Trueman, Tyson and Co. were not good enough to beat Australia on Australian pitches, and they may not beat India on the renewed English pitches of 1959. We shall see. What I do not expect to see from these Indians

is a repetition of the tactics of strategic withdrawal practised against Trueman in 1952. At Manchester in that year certain Indian batsmen were taking guard outside the square-leg umpire: this time they have brought Surendra Nath, widely known as "Surrender Not," to stiffen morale.

On the eve of the first Test I am thinking of making full recompense for my wretched behaviour in 1936. At midnight I propose to call on Peter May and Colin Cowdrey, at their hotel, and read them half a dozen chapters from Keith Miller's review of the last Australian summer. But I still have my money on England.

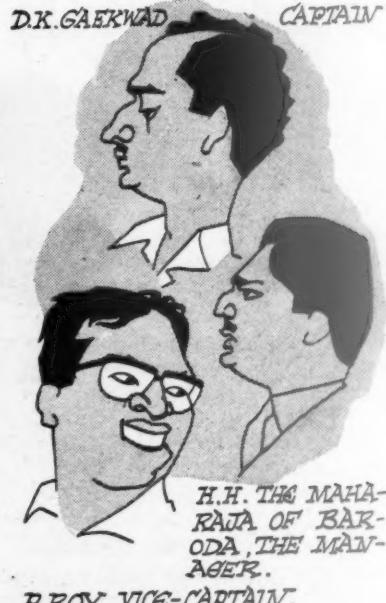
— BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



N.J. CONTRACTOR

V.L. MANJREKAR

P.R. UMRIGAR



H.H. THE MAHARAJA OF BARODA, THE MANAGER.

P. ROY, VICE-CAPTAIN.

Toby Competitions

No. 71—Gunville

HOW well we know that town in the Westerns, the bar with the swinging doors, the badmen riding into town, the Indians, the shooting. But what about the rest of its civic life? Competitors are invited to produce, in not more than 120 words, extracts from the local newspaper report of one of the following: (a) Ladies' Luncheon Club, (b) Rotarian Annual Dinner, (c) Anti-Liquor League Meeting, (d) Town Publicity Committee.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive a book token to the value of one guinea. Entries by first post on Friday, June 12, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 71, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 68 (*Da Capo*)

Competitors were asked to provide a song especially suitable for singing in a car on a Bank Holiday, and the grim glories of

Bentley's Gallery



Brigitte Bardot

A personality like that of Brigitte Bardot implies—well, a flibetti-gibbitte. Without wishing to seem contrary, hers Seems hardly that d'une femme très sérieuse.

our national festivities came in for some fairly heavy celebration, mostly to the tunes of old favourites well supplied with sustained top notes. Anything not singable was eliminated, however ingenious. The winner is:

A. A. WAUGH

WOOD END

FAIROAK LANE

OXSHOTT

LEATHERHEAD, SURREY

working on lines laid down by Kipling:

CALLING ALL ROAD HOGS

God bless our bright Bank Holiday, let's hail it with a toot,
For the snail is on the thorn and the hooch is in the boot.
Fill her up with super-super and burn the Highway Code!
We'll go hogging it together down the Portsmouth Road.
Oh, the cornering at sixty! Oh, the thrill when Greek meets Greek!
The split-second overtaking! the umpteenth narrow squeak!
See that woman on the zebra? She's as jumpy as a toad
As she watches us go hogging down the Portsmouth Road.
Sometimes we smile to think that never blows so red
The rose as where some luckless Wisley Fellow bled
Who tried to reach the Gardens while we roared and overflowed
And who furnished them with phosphates from the Portsmouth Road.
Good scorching, brother roadhogs! Let speed be unconfined!
Though now and then a tiny thought invades my tiny mind
That one day without warning we may face the Dark Abode,
When *at last* we've overdone it down the Portsmouth Road.

Songs that have sung their way to book-tokens are:

With a ho and a hi and a tiddle-tum-to
Let's sing our holiday song!

As rolling along the road we go

In a queue that's a thousand strong.
Big cars, little cars, shooting brakes, scooters,
Chaps in a hurry leaning on their hooters,
Everyone is heading for the sea
(Ho, hi, tiddle-tum-tee!)

And as we won't get there till the afternoon
Let's fill in with our jolly little tune
And a ho and a . . ., etc.: (repeat *ad infinitum*).

Mrs. B. Brocklesby, 83, St. John's Road, Oxford

(*To the tune of Three Blind Mice*)

We couldn't care less.
We couldn't care less.
We've plastered the car up
With cute little tags.
The back window's obscured with
A dolly and flags.
So chuck out the cartons and used paper bags.
We couldn't care less.
We couldn't care less.
For warnings and coppers
We don't give a hoot.
Our only concern is
The beer in the boot.
So let's overtake with a jolly good hoot.
We couldn't care less.

Mary Roberts, 40 Pettiver Crescent, Rugby

The motor-car is a poor man's joy, Hurrah! Hurrah!
The motor-car is the poor man's joy, Hurrah! Hurrah!
The motor-car is the poor man's joy,
He'll never get rich but he loves his toy,
And it's all to keep his poor bunions off the road.

The motor-car is the poor man's hope, etc.:
If it lets him down there's a towing-rope,
And it's all to keep his poor bunions off the road.

The motor-car is the poor man's heaven, etc.
It's meant to take four but we've squeezed in seven,
And it's all to keep his poor bunions off the road.

*Mrs. Sylvia J. Beare, 12 Tyndall Avenue, St. Michael's Hill
Bristol 2*

An Office System

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

THE Business Efficiency Exhibition has fired the imagination of many go-ahead executives: the idea of a Dual Push-Button Selector Auto-Typist alone is mouth-watering. But can we yet rule out the human element, the single, buttonless, unselective unit of personnel? I have luckily come across one of my own directives as managing director of a small but efficient boot-testing business:

PAPER-CLIPS

Idle hours are best spent reconstituting these from adaptations as pipe-cleaners, hooks for recovering lipsticks from under radiators and those miscellaneous, or Reg Butler, shapes imposed by deep administrative thought. To sit linking them together into a six-foot necklace only causes delay and annoyance later.

BLOTTING-PAPER

A day should be agreed for changing, and senior staff notified. What about August 1st, when temperatures conduce to quick-drying ink anyway? The present system of changing paper on the morning after vital telephone numbers have been noted thereon will cease forthwith. Staff time spent going through dust-bins, tips and pulping factories is not economic.

LIFTS

Personnel with business on other floors will not wedge the lift door with handbags or umbrellas. Health authorities blame most executives' ulcers on their having to decide between continuing to ring or cutting their losses and walking. Personnel with Tappit's Disease (sometimes known as the stick-along-railings complex) will make special efforts not to play with the alarm bell, emergency stop, etc., as the constant hiring of fire brigade lifting-gear is hard to justify to the auditors.

OFFICE PARTIES

These commonly concern birthdays, engagements, marriages or unclassified departures, also Christmas, but shall here be taken to include sweepstakes. This practice is now forbidden. Our

Statistics Department shows that only three days last year were entirely celebration free, that 28 man- and 394 woman-hours were lost; moreover 18 bottles of sherry and 16 coffee-layer cakes were very probably charged out under Stationery. Lastly, the figures were probably fiddled to exclude celebrations in the Statistical Department.

EXTRAMURAL ACTIVITIES

Staff will leave the office only on office business, which includes obtaining cigarettes, theatre-tickets, etc., on behalf of directors and departmental managers. Junior staff must make a return in writing showing time spent watching excavations, building - demolitions, lorries wedged sideways-on in narrow thoroughfares, and other unofficial and avoidable delays. Hairdressing, both sexes, must take place in off-duty hours (unless as a result of an order from an executive or comment by clients).

CORRESPONDENCE

Typists bidden to take letters in shorthand must equip themselves with notebook and pencil. Too much time is spent finding, borrowing or going out and buying when required, also in discovering, if available, that pencils are broken and notebooks full. Typists finding in transcription that the matter is meaningless should check before cutting stencils. ("Old Sailors" for "Wholesalers" is a common example.)

TELEPHONES

External. Staff who ring fiancés/ées or similar associates during office hours will check periodically with the switchboard to ensure that at least one line is free for the conducting of the firm's business. That apart, it should be remembered that directors and departmental heads may be trying to contact their fiancés/ées or similar associates. Secretaries whose chiefs are busy with visitors will tell callers that and no more. To say "Mr. Kippley is interviewing a fair-haired lady in mink and has just rung for more coffee" is time-wasting and irrelevant. Mrs. Kippley merely wishes to know when Mr. Kippley will be free, and will talk to him then.

Internal. These have been installed



"I remember your face all right but I've a poor head for figures."

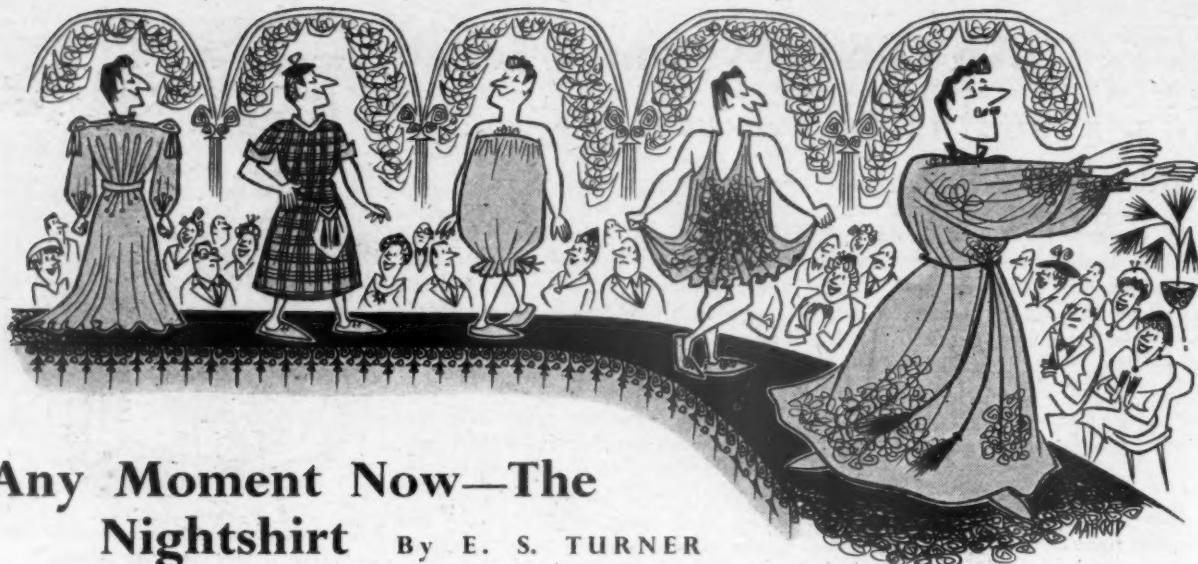
for the advancement of business matters. To have them jammed daily until 11.30 a.m. with calls of a "How-did-you get-on-last-night?" nature is inefficient. Also, many hours are lost by personnel running to answer a 'phone which (a) turns out to be somebody's else's, and (b) stops ringing as they get there. A short study of the building's acoustics will enable you to recognize your own ring; if you ring another room and get no reply, hang up before they start running.

Switchboard operators should be at it, not stitching on buttons for the commissionaire.

CONCLUSION

Since the installation of the new Radio-Duplex Twentieth Century Postage-Stamp Wetter there have been several undesirable incidents, including Miss Bosforth's catching her beads in it and two seize-ups and explosions due to failure in replenishing the water supply. I see that it is now in a corner of the general office serving as a repository for macintoshes and unfiled correspondence. Use of this machine will be resumed forthwith, as a balance-sheet necessity.

These few rules, it seemed to me, should have done more for business efficiency than any business efficiency equipment. Unfortunately I was unable to prove this, as I had to pack up the business owing to an *en bloc* staff resignation.



Any Moment Now—The Nightshirt

By E. S. TURNER

BY general acclaim the most haunting stage direction in Shakespeare is "Exit, pursued by a bear," in *The Winter's Tale*, but many of us, as schoolboys, derived much ignorant pleasure from "Enter Cæsar, in his nightgown."

It was impossible to take Cæsar seriously after that. The man who divided Gaul into three parts stood revealed as a shambling grand-dad surprised on the upstairs landing.

Very probably the nightgown Shakespeare had in mind was a dressing-gown of imperial opulence, but we were not to know that. To us a nightgown was a flannel tent worn only by the old-fashioned, the eccentric and the corpulent.

Of late there have been several attempts to revive interest in night-gowns and nightshirts for men. No male fashion display is complete unless an ex-wing commander ambles nonchalantly along the catwalk in unbifurcated slumberwear. At Celanese House a model appeared before a mixed audience wearing a night creation in rayon by Ronald Paterson, *couturier* of top people. It received cordial, and even warm, applause from the ladies in the audience; though one can never be quite sure on these occasions whether the applause is a tribute to the elegance of the garment or the *panache* of the wearer.

Students of store advertisements will have observed that a firm in Oxford Street regularly offers men's nightgowns

alongside its pyjamas. It reports that over the last two years sales have been on the increase. Young men, as well as elderly men with barrel chests, have been buying them.

In Knightsbridge the male night-gown-fancier can select a winter ankle-length gown in light blue, deep rose or green, or a summer sleep-coat reaching below the knee, tastefully piped and pocketed, in grey, rose and other shades. The colour choice seems very reasonable, though our ancestors would have noticed one omission. It was a measure of their sensibility (one gathers from the Cunningtons' *History of Underclothes*) that they wore black night-clothes when in mourning.

Quite a number of men are willing to agree that nightshirts are a jolly good idea, old boy, but their enthusiasm stops just short of wearing one. Women will even agree that men would be far more comfortable in nightshirts, but they are not prepared to be the first to hang one on the clothes-line. It is time that someone like Baron Wrangell, in his black eye-patch, faced the challenge of looking distinguished in a nightshirt. One sees him, in a sable calf-length shirt with not-too-rich gold frogging, standing on a balcony at dawn looking down on the misted spires of Gotham.

A small but stubborn body of Englishmen never gave up wearing nightshirts even during air raids, which notoriously frightened thousands of women into pyjamas. Their spokesmen tell us that the chief delight of sleeping in a nightshirt is that one does not suffer strangulation amidships. They pooh-pooh the notion that a nightshirt inevitably finishes up round the sleeper's neck. One must learn how to wear it, they say, just as one must learn how to wear a kilt.

According to that knowledgeable organ, *Man About Town*, a nightshirt can be prevented from riding up in several ways: by attaching bedsocks to the bottom and putting one's feet in them; by training the toes to grip the hem as one lies in bed (why not toe-holes?); and, most ingeniously, by wearing one's sock suspenders upside down and clipping them to the hem. When *Julius Cæsar* is next produced in



modern dress the entry of Caesar in nightshirt and suspenders ought to be a memorable one. Meanwhile, nobody should be afraid of shocking the postman by going to the door in this array. Postmen have seen everything.

It is an open secret that for years men have been growing dissatisfied with their pyjamas. In America, in 1954, E. C. Schultz patented a device to prevent pyjama legs from riding up (a problem one had supposed could be solved only with the aid of cycle-clips or even drawing-pins). But his device, whatever it was, was only tinkering



with the problem. In Mr. Schultz's country the fear of being crotch-bound is not the least of the terrors that stalk by night (and by day too). It is evident that many sleepers have been frightened right out of their trousers, for the number of these sold by no means keeps up with the number of jackets. Nor is this a peculiarity of America. It has been stated publicly that in France three out of four men wear only the jackets of their pyjamas, possibly for reasons of comfort, possibly just because they are French. This information emerged in the course of a £100,000 survey on male clothing preferences conducted nine years ago by the United States Department of Agriculture, which holds investigations into many improbable topics, sometimes even agricultural ones. With £100,000 to spend there is very little one cannot find out. So far as is known, this revelation of French sleeping habits has never been denied by the Quai d'Orsay.

If the trend is towards treating pyjama jackets as nightshirts it ought

not to be too difficult to popularize nightshirts as such. But British males do not necessarily follow the sleeping customs of America and France. That Oxford Street store which has worked up a market for nightgowns offers pyjamas as "separates" and sells nearly twice as many trousers as jackets. This is not merely because trousers wear out more quickly and have to be replaced, but because many men in Britain wear pyjama trousers only. If there are British males who wear only pyjama jackets they have been sufficiently shy to keep themselves out of the statistics. It is up to our admen to stop sniggering at the mere mention of nightshirts and find out what men really wear for one third of their lives.

Nightcaps are another story, but it is a story with a relevant moral. Seven years ago an American journalist wrote an article deplored that he had been unable to buy a nightcap in either London or New York. A manufacturer sought to fill the vacuum by making two hundred dozen, and other manufacturers, fearing that he might corner a new market, joined in. As a result the nightcap became "standard gimmick equipment" in thousands of homes and was worn at cocktail parties and reunions. It did not, however, become



standard non-gimmick equipment in bed, as the manufacturer had hoped.

That is the risk with the nightgown. No manufacturer wants to see his new line, complete with gussets and girdle, piping and frogging, used as a gimmick by Chelsea revellers on the Underground. What he would like is to have it taken up by the teenage *avant garde*. Their tastes are uninhibited and unpredictable. If they suddenly decided to wear snazzy nightshirts it could be the biggest thing since—well, since pyjamas.

Quid Pro Quo

IT'S splendid to trade with the Russians,
Just think of the things we shall get,
The Boots and the Salads,
The Ballet, the Ballads,
The thrills of that Russian Roulette.

And yet, when we trade with the Russians,
What's British that we can give *them*?
The Germans have Measles,
The Dutch their Dutch Cheesles,
But what's truly British but Phlegm?

The French are well stocked with their Mustard,
American Bars simply swarm,
There are Turkish Delights
And Arabian Nights,
But what is there British but Warm?

Besides, when we trade with the Russians,
And there comes a Siberian freeze,
We'll be conscious throughout of
The fact that we're out of
Such much-needed assets as these . . .

— J. B. BOOTHROYD

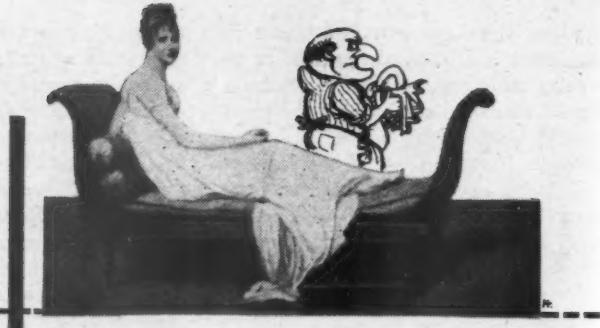
The Colour Lift

"YOU can get a really discreet colour lift in ten to fifteen minutes," said the hair-colouring demonstrator. "You can have it done in your lunch-time with a shampoo and set and a sandwich." In fact hair-colouring (modern usage for hair-dyeing) has become part of a woman's normal routine. No longer a hush-hush beauty boost, it has, with the vogue for open-plan hairdressing salons, become an open secret, a topic of conversation.

In the past, hair-dyeing was always regarded as something to do with morals—in some periods not without reason; but latterly it has come to be thought no more fast, and no more loose, than the use of cosmetics. There can be no ethical reason why it should be more questionable to improve the colour of your hair than to improve your complexion and lips; and clearly the reason for the old taboo was simply that in less scientific times hair-dyeing was a hit-or-miss operation. Now that one can be sure of a hit the prejudice has gone, and British women are spending some two million pounds a year on hair cosmetics. It is estimated that one in every ten is changing or enhancing her natural shade.

Gentlemen who prefer blondes do not usually specify whether it is the silver

FOR
WOMEN



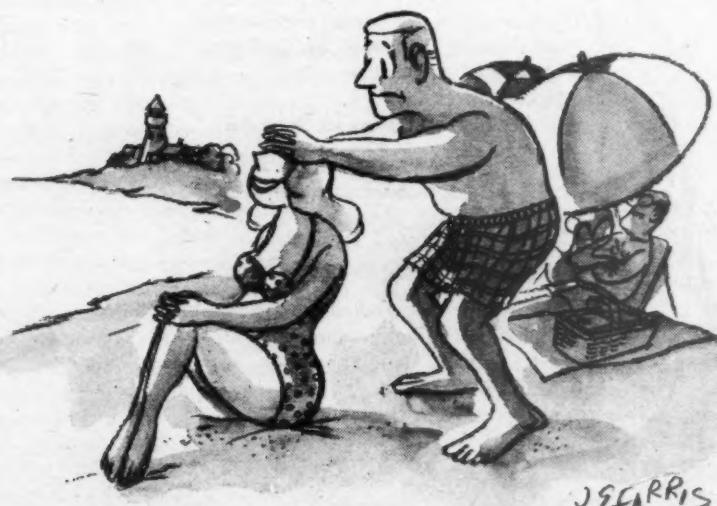
blonde, ash, platinum, or beige blonde they have in mind; yet all these are currently fashionable shades. At this Amirol hair-colouring demonstration we were told of "Whipped Creme Hair Lightener" which is made in no fewer than eighteen shades of blonde and which, with the addition of "Lightening Booster," can be blended into infinitely more. The only blonde that is considered *non-bon-ton* is the brassy blonde. The girl who is so unfortunate as to be a natural brass blonde can be "drabbed," a professional term for the elimination of red and gold tones. This does not turn you into a drab, but is a preliminary to achieving such intoxicating shades as *Sparkling Sherry* and *Champagne*, or the sweeter *Honey Blonde* and *Golden Apricot*.

For grey hair there is a treatment called "Come Alive Grey," which highlights the hair and dismisses yellow discolouration. Blue and mauve rinses are

now considered out of date, and about time too. Mrs. Carmel Snow of American *Harper's Bazaar* had a long mauve period; but Neville Williams in *Powder and Paint* attributes the first mauve hair to Lady Mendl, way back in the 'twenties. Lady Mendl is known, also, to have made at least one appearance with acid green hair. Her colour moods were certainly capricious, for it was she who, when taken to see the Parthenon for the first time, cried out in rapture: "My favourite colour, beige!"; but it is not on record whether or not she was a beige-blonde at the time.

It is to such brave pioneers of old-time Café Society we owe thanks for lifting hair-dyeing into high fashion. They blazed a trail which the most modest maidens can now follow in their lunch hours, with no more hesitation than buying a new hat. The "Glamour Colour Bath Treatment" (the one you have with your shampoo and set and sandwiches) is not just a rinse but a permanent colouring which is absorbed into the structure of the hair. It does not stain the scalp at all, and leaves no demarcation line after growth—the root hair can be touched up as it grows. There is no need for preliminary bleaching, and the colourant contains a conditioning agent to retain the hair's elasticity. The truly amiable qualities of this product have made it for twenty-five years the leading hair-colourant in America, where all handsome women are slightly colour-lifted.

A woman with a fair skin has the widest choice of shades; she can choose any of the blonds, any of the reds, and even blue-black if she is young. But generally speaking, it is best to go a shade lighter than the natural hair . . . particularly if you are over forty, when the skin begins to pale. This summer hair cosmeticians are promoting "The



" . . . Bill? John? Frank? Al? Jerry? Sal? Jack? Gordon? Dick?
Paul? George? Ed? Vin? Harry? Walter? Fran? Nick?"

Shade Lighter Look" for young and middle-aged alike. The really important thing is not to move out of your colour group, since the natural hair blends with the eyes, eyelashes, brows, and skin-tone. It is only the Lady Mendls of this world who can carry off a sudden and total volte-face. The general aim is to look the same, only different: lighter, brighter, younger, but still *you*.

— ALISON ADBURGHAM

Anniversary

THIS is what happens when Other People have an anniversary.

SHE speaks first, while lolling in bed drinking early morning tea from family heirloom cup. SHE wears transparent nylon night-dress.

HE: Darling, do you love me as much as you did seven years ago?

HE: I love you even more, darling, because I know you better.

SHE: But I do look older, don't I?

HE: No, of course you don't. Not a day over twenty-three, in spite of the fact that you've reached the great age of twenty-seven.

SHE: Oh, darling, you are sweet! I'm thirty this year.

HE: You still look like a child bride.

HE exits to the bathroom for his early morning exercises. These keep him young and alert and able to earn plenty of money for her.

This is what happens on Our anniversary.

I speak first. I am sitting in bed drinking lukewarm tea which drips down my night-dress (crumpled cotton) because HE has slopped the tea into the saucer. A pile of used paper handkerchiefs lies on the bedside table because my allergy is worse in the morning.

SELF: Darling, do you love me as much as you did seven years ago?

HUSBAND: Don't be silly, it's different now. We're used to each other.

SELF: Oh. (Pause.) Do you think I look much older?

HUSBAND: How old are you?

SELF: You are mean not to remember even. I'm thirty. Eight years younger than you. It's nice that you should be older than I am because a woman ages more quickly than a man.

HUSBAND (with unusual acuteness): You mean, imagine me being thirty



again and having to marry you like you are now? That *would* be rough—dog rough!

I reach a feverish hand for that good-class magazine with the interesting advertisement for hormone creams.

HUSBAND exits, stooping, paunchy, slightly bald. HE is over-worked, under-paid, and supremely, maddeningly confident of his undiminished charm.

— PATRICIA RILEY

Fit to Plough

SAY not the struggle naught avails. At least we've bumped the clinic scales

And borne, with but a squeal or so,
Dip. Imm. and anti-polio.
Nor Whooping-Cough nor Tetanus
Can ever hope to set on us,
And little jabs of B.C.G.
From worse than death have set us free.
If our Eleven-Plus should therefore
Harvest results you do not care for
And shatter your white-collar fancies,
Consider all the other chances!
Just think how sturdily we're made
For wielding shovel, pick or spade;
(And how much we shall be paid!)

— HAZEL TOWNSON

Proposal Forms—3

YES, Godfrey, of course I want children. Half a dozen at least—Emma, Charlotte, Henrietta, Anne, William and Charles. It's quite simple. One has them by natural childbirth, feeds them on demand, goes in for late toilet-training, and smacks them if one feels like it so as not to bottle up aggression. And with it all one keeps one's pliant, willowy waist. We won't let them interfere with our social life the least little bit, either. They will always come with us to parties. And if we decide to visit Florence, or Tangier, or Johannesburg by way of the Sahara, we'll just bundle the cot into the Land Rover with a packet of disposable napkins. It's a piece of cake.

Education's marvellously cut-and-dried too. First the Babies' Club, then the Nursery School, then the Lycée (makes them worth their weight in gold on Continental holidays), and then if we feel daring perhaps Dartington. Then Oxford, and a career. I must say I find it awfully hard to fit them into careers, don't you? What's that? You haven't asked me to marry you yet? Well you'd better hurry, hadn't you?

In the City**Take-Over Beer**

THE City is again rocking to the blows and counterblows of the take-over bidders. Very nice for the shareholders whose property is being auctioned to levels undreamt of a few months ago—Newnes up from 54s. to 96s. in a matter of weeks, Watney Mann from 52s. to 72s. 6d. in a few hectic hours.

The main ring, with all the arc-lamps of public interest focused on it, is now occupied by Messrs. Clore and Combe, Chairmen of Sears Holdings and Watney Mann. Mr. Charles Clore wants to extend his already considerable and variegated Sears empire. From boots and shoes it has spread in successful and profitable leaps to engineering, motor distribution and shipbuilding. The brewing industry is the next objective; and with the discernment we have come to expect from Mr. Clore he goes for one of the best of its components—Watney Mann.

Why beer? One has heard of champagne from actresses' slippers—but beer from a Dolcis brogue looks, and may perhaps taste, decidedly odd. So it would be deemed by the Watney Mann directors who have described the offer as "entirely unacceptable" and have told shareholders to sit tight (and who would not sit tight in such happy circumstances?) until a detailed statement of the Board's views has been issued.

What appeals to Mr. Clore is not so much the brewing of beer or the running of pubs—though he seems to have interesting democratic ideas on the latter—as the bricks and mortars and sites that would come with the Watney Mann assets.

Here—leaving the particular of the Watney affair for general principles—we come to the roots of most of the take-over bids that have enthralled us in the recent past. These roots are in the currency inflation of the past twenty years. The value of real assets

has gone up, in most cases, far beyond the figures indicated by balance sheet values. This inflation of money values must have a distorting effect on one's assessment of the adequacy of profits and dividends as well as on the market valuation of the shares concerned. Profits which appear reasonable when calculated in terms of the book values of the assets could be inadequate as a return on their true present-day value. Properties used for one purpose could, in the changed circumstances, be far more profitably employed for other purposes. The wideawake entrepreneur who sees all this before others do, and who has the necessary financial resources at his disposal, has the take-over ball at his feet.

By drawing attention to these distortions of values, by keeping boards of directors on their toes, by encouraging them to use their resources with the maximum of efficiency, the take-over

financier can and often does play a most useful role. We may question his tactics or disagree with the mixture he is concocting, but if we believe in a free, capitalistic system we must accept his right to express his opinion of the value of the assets for which he is bidding. Mr. Clore may, in this particular case, have uncorked more than he can swallow, but he has every right to "have a go."

Watney Mann shares have risen so far beyond the original offer made by Sears Holdings that counter-bids are clearly being discounted by the market. In the circumstances the happy holder of the shares can but wait and see the unfolding of a battle which, even for the materially disinterested onlooker, promises to be one of the bonniest fights in take-over history and one in which the most intriguingly contrasted opponents will be involved.

— LOMBARD LANE

In the Country**The Female Fag**

IT is curious how the fagging system is confined to boys' schools. You seldom hear of it at Roedean, Heathfield, Miss Honeybun's Academy for Young Ladies, or indeed the Scarborough High School for girls. And yet, why not? If marriage is still the number one career choice for girls, surely the art of fagging should early be inculcated into the budding wife. Helpmeet by name and helpmeet by nature.

Never is this more truly illustrated than in the field of sport. Let us take shooting. Who but the female fag is to lead the dog (but not work it) and carry heavy cartridge bags over young mountains by what one is assured are splendid deer paths? She is also expected, if ordered, to canter across two ploughed fields and the local river in spate to collect her lord and master's mackintosh trousers from the game cart, and keep a stiff upper lip over retrieving fluttering feathered

corpses and gory hares which, as well as weighing a ton, bleed down her heavyweight lises.

The duties of a fishing fag require infinite finesse and are not to be undertaken lightly. The wise ones come prepared for a long, long day and bring something—if only newspapers—to put between them and the wet bank while "getting on with the sock." As a bride I once answered shouts for assistance by plunging enthusiastically in after an over-active salmon armed only with a knitting needle.

"Can you go home and get dry?" inquired my fagmaster in astonishment. "But I need you with the landing-net. Why can't you take the rough with the smooth like me?"

Once I was lent as a fag to another upper school boy—a trembly old angler who scared me stiff by wagging his rod in the air at the height of a lethal thunderstorm. Only yells that he was into a fish (note the professional) weaned me from the sopping bracken into which I had thrown myself to escape the lightning. The fish tore up and down the river and in and out of five pools dragging the ancient angler behind. It only met its Waterloo when I flung all my eleven stone on top of it in five feet of water. That day we were allowed a full ten minutes for lunch.

But the longest and wettest day must end, and what then are the female fag's duties? Why, the same as her young masculine counterpart's. To dry her fagmaster's shoes and make piles of hot buttered toast.

— ELIZABETH CAYLEY



BOOKING OFFICE

New Fiction

Gate to the Sea. Bryher. *Collins*, 12/6.
Quadrantus Rex. Norbert Coulehan. *Macmillan*, 16/-.
Leviathan. Warren Tute. *Cassell*, 16/-.
Three Among Mountains. Humphrey Slater. *Wingate*, 15/-.

IT is difficult to place these books in order of merit. In different ways each is well written. Perhaps the palm must go, for elegant prose and sensitive description, to *Gate to the Sea*, a brief novel in the classical vein that seems so fashionable at the moment. It is set in Poseidonia in the fourth century B.C. The priestess Harmonia has stayed behind after the Lucanian conquest to guard the relics; her brother Archias returns in secret, ordered by the oracle to rescue her. They take advantage of the annual ceremony of Hera, when the Lucanians relax the restrictions on their slaves, to get away by the skin of their teeth. "Bryher"—all one knows about her is her sex—writes so naturally of the people of a lost age that they come up shiningly alive.

Also just B.C. is an original sea-story, *Quadrantus Rex*, in which we sail with the Roman navy on a royal mission commanded by a hand-picked young commodore. He is ordered by Augustus to fetch two kings to Rome for a world peace conference, and when this collapses he is told to drop them, plus their colleague from the East, at Caesaria. On the second voyage a new star is discovered, stationary over Bethlehem, and the three kings go towards it, carrying their gifts. Mr. Coulehan's colloquial dialogue very nearly fools us into believing the Poseidon Club in Rome to be our Senior, the Marine Office our Admiralty; apart from the reliance of Augustus on a thunder-proof jacket and the entrails of old chickens Rome was absurdly modern. This is a witty and ironic novel, tinged with a mild

mysticism. Its ripe admiral is a splendid comic creation.

Leviathan is another novel of the sea, the story of a great liner tackled with a zest for effective detail of which I think Arnold Bennett would have approved. The ship herself, a giant built to skim the cream off the New York run, is the chief character, and we are fully seized of her magnificence. We see her and smell her, we get to know her hierarchy and unwritten social patterns and the quantity of caviar she needs for the Atlantic crossing. During her four years of life we follow her through her gilded duties, through the rich futilities of a luxury cruise, and finally through the American trooping that ends in a fearful hammering from U-boats and the Luftwaffe. Against this ninety-thousand-ton background Mr. Tute deploys amusingly a large cast, and gives his heroine, an experimental purserette, a very lively time. I am not sure that I took to this ruthlessly determined girl as her author

clearly did, but she adds interest to a fat and very readable novel.

A wartime escape story, *Three Among Mountains* is lifted well above thriller level by its close interest in behaviour and its knowledge of the darker corners of the human mind. The three men who get away from a civilian prison in occupied France—a British officer, a Spanish count and a German Communist—are all on special missions but ignorant of one another's identity. Mutual advantage keeps them together, but only under an artificial truce. Distrust deepens as they slog their way towards the Spanish frontier, a double murder having mobilized all the police against them; until, falling into the hands of the Resistance, they are saved from torture by a political whim and helped over the border. Humphrey Slater, who died last year, must have known French provincial life and the Languedoc country pretty well. His novel is dramatic and it rings true.

— ERIC KEOWN

POETS' CORNER



13. MARIANNE MOORE

BLOOD COUNT

Maigret Has Scruples. Simenon. *Hamish Hamilton*, 12/6. In a blank period Maigret tries to prevent a crime, after being visited by a nervous toy-salesman who is convinced his wife is trying to poison him. Ordinary plot concealed by obsessively convincing details and characters. Translation not quite perfect.

The Negro. Simenon. *Hamish Hamilton*, 12/6. Slow but enthralling account of an ineffectual railway halt-keeper's attempt to blackmail the local villain. He alone has seen the negro, victim of a faked railway accident, alive when he was supposed to be dead, but everyone else in the village knows things he doesn't. Fine seedy auberge interiors.

Death by Marriage. E. G. Cousins. *John Gifford*, 10/6. A curious *tour de force*. Narrator, a regular Army officer, hears his divorced wife has died in locked bathroom. Attending inquest decides her new husband has done her in somehow. Tries, during various

leaves, to hound him down. Narrator's character and speech extremely well done. Scrappiness of real life nicely reproduced.

Swing Away, Climber. Glyn Carr. *Geoffrey Bles*, 12/6. Mountaineering party in North Wales are pestered by nasty character who is later found hanged on an awesome local crag which the whole party was climbing by different routes in a thick mist. Looks like suicide, but Sir Abercrombie Lewker, the actor-manager amateur detective, is suspicious and finally puts blue-blooded Scotland-Yarder in his place.

Ossian's Ride. Fred Hoyle. *Heinemann*, 15/-. Madly unconvincing but enjoyable Buchan-in-the-future. Young scientist sent by English secret service to penetrate impenetrable bit of Southern Ireland where extraordinary industrial developments are taking place, attracting hordes of unsuccessful spies. A lot of haring about between labs leads to not very impressive directing intelligences.

— PETER DICKINSON

WOMEN'S REALM

Mistress to an Age. The Life of Mme. de Staël. J. Christopher Herold. *Hamish Hamilton*, 21/-

Germaine de Staël, that tumultuous, turbanned figure, stands at the meeting-point of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. She seems to have a finger in every historical pie. Her mother was jilted by Gibbon, and married Necker, the Minister of Finance to Louis XVI. She herself nearly married William Pitt, married (in turn) two nonentities, became the mistress of Talleyrand and Constant, the passionate friend of Mme. Récamier, the passionate enemy of Napoleon, who considered her "a veritable raven" but admitted that her fame would endure. She presided over a scintillating *salon*, tossed off a number of literary classics, intrigued in politics like an intellectual fury, and electrified everyone by her conversation. "All the volcanoes put together," decided Benjamin Constant, "are less flamboyant than she." Small wonder that Germaine de Staël demands an outstanding biographer. In Mr. Christopher Herold she has found one: his eager, lucid, detailed study recalls her and her milieu with quite remarkable skill. As Napoleon said of Mme. de Staël, it is "very distinguished, very brilliant." It is really a masterpiece. — J. R.

Sarah Bernhardt. Joanna Richardson. *Reinhardt*, 21/-

How great an actress was Bernhardt? In her photographs she leaves no great impression. The blaze of publicity in which she lived makes it difficult to get at the truth. She kept a live cheetah, slept in a coffin lined with satin, and was far from reticent about her many lovers; wherever she went she saw to it that she was tremendous news. She appeared far too often in inferior melodramas, and



"I bin thinkin', Smiley, what is it that's so hep about being white?"

as a result of presenting French plays to foreign audiences her style coarsened in middle age. Henry James and Shaw and Max Beerbohm remained critical; yet Paris and London and New York were at her feet. Her voice was miraculous, and her power to move unsurpassed.

In this scholarly and highly readable biography Miss Richardson leaves the question open, but suggests that Rachel was the purer artist. Bernhardt's size as a human being is beyond doubt. Generous and courageous, it was she who persuaded Zola to take up the defence of Dreyfus. — E. O. D. K.

Bess of Hardwick. E. Carleton Williams. *Longmans*, 25/-

Elizabethan objectives were obvious and unquestioned: wealth, houses, a great name. Bess of Hardwick pursued them with tenacity: four times married, a matriarch from whom the Cavendishes descend, she built two Renaissance palaces, Chatsworth and Hardwick. For fourteen years, as Lady Shrewsbury, she was custodian of Mary Queen of Scots, who relieved her boredom with needle-work at which "she continued so long till very pain made her to give over," who seldom went to bed until one in the morning, who plotted incorrigibly till the end, and whose Frenchified household refused to drink ale and demanded hogsheads of imported wine. Bess's unrewarding task was made more exacting by the tantrums and political manoeuvres of Elizabeth I, who finally thwarted her supreme ambition to see her grand-daughter, Arabella Stuart, Queen of England.

As biography this book is hardly brisk, but it is based on much research and is

full of interesting detail; of luxury and hardship, extravagance and parsimony, of romantic panache and laborious accumulation. The clutter-up of property, furniture, hangings and clothes, the tokens of success, were only won by hard work. Etonians worked ten hours a day, though the young Cavendishes paid 3d. "to see bear baiting and a camel."

— J. E. B.

OTHER NEW BOOKS

Wolfe at Quebec. Christopher Hibbert. *Longmans*, 21/-

Although the Government were doubtful of his sanity they gave bigger and bigger jobs to the impudent young officer, despite his lack of family influence and his reputation of being impossible to get on with, because in an age of negligent officers he worked furiously, in an age of amateurish officers he was professional and in an age where personal military leadership was rare he was fantastically brave. Mr. Hibbert's beautifully made account of the Quebec expedition, in which he firmly backs the Brigadiers against Wolfe, makes a thrilling story out of the collision of a neurotic temperament and a classical military problem.

Mr. Hibbert says he is aiming at the entertainment of the general reader rather than at scholarship; but his book is based on a good deal of research. His picture of Wolfe and the storming of the Heights of Abraham is quite different from the story as used by schoolmasters to inspire their boys. Even the Gray's *Elegy* anecdote is different: apparently Wolfe recited it to his Brigadiers and broke off in a huff at their lukewarm reception.

— R. G. G. P.

Safe Conduct and Other Works. Boris Pasternak. Translated by Alec Brown. *Elek*, 15/-

This brief but intensive essay in autobiography, and four stories here published with it, seems to comprise all Pasternak's creative prose, apart from *Zhivago*. *Safe Conduct* first appeared in 1931. A subjective, symbolic assimilation of outward events, it recalls, more than anything, Rilke's *Malte* (Rilke is the dedicatee and the first figure to appear in it) or the Proust of *Santeuil*. And yet what a difference of character from either! Rugged and recondite, Pasternak records the people and places that influenced him most profoundly—Scriabin, Mayakovsky, Marburg, Venice—with an effect of overwhelmingly sensitive collision. The compressions and twists of thought connecting impressionist surface and inner meaning sometimes reduce the otherwise lively translation to incoherence. But the book is worth the trouble. And *Zhenia's Childhood* is a story like no other, a true—and very peculiar—stroke of intuition. The remaining three stories are intractable riddles and Mr. Brown's proffered solutions don't seem to fit. The selected poems (a few translated

by the poet's sister) offer the usual charms of translated poetry—something between jog-trot and dream-jingle.

— D. P.

Oh, The Monkeys Have No Tails. Reese Wolfe. *Gollancz*, 15/-

When aged 18 the author, then a college sophomore studying for holy orders, embarked as cadet officer on a rust-ridden tramp bound for Manila with a cargo of T.N.T. (some used for dynamiting tiger-sharks on the way out) and a Chinese crew. With three months pay (35 cents) he bought a blond monkey in Batavia that ate red bananas and later indirectly saved his life during a brush with Chinese revolutionaries in Canton. An admirer of Masefield, he had been assigned Jack London's desk at high school in Oakland, and his characterizations of the enigmatic captain (himself only 29), the half-blind navigation officer (who once steered a course by the masthead light), Oscar the assistant-engineer addicted to Sam McGill (in reality San Miguel) beer, are highly entertaining. Oscar's chief's clandestine short stories were about land-dogs, though he'd never owned one and scorned to write about the sea. Many readers will be glad Mr. Wolfe was not of like opinion.

— J. M.R.

CREDIT BALANCE

Waiting for the Sky to Fall. Kenneth Martin. *Chapman and Hall*, 16/-. Keen observation and adroit writing about characters, not worth the expense of so much talent, in London's coffee-bar belt. Full of promise.

Conversations with Igor Stravinsky. Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft. *Faber*, 21/-. Illuminating dialogues between the most intellectual musician alive and his very perceptive disciple. Of the highest value to anyone interested in the working of the artistic mind, and of historic value to musicians.

Oh, Mary, This London. Michael Campbell. *Heinemann*, 16/-. Young Irishman in London. Superficially picaresque (all the old *milieux*), but in fact planned, with a splendid comic climax; admirably written and very amusing. Mr. Campbell has an ear, an eye, and (what is rarer) a mind. Most enjoyable.

Cinderella and Other Stories. The Fables of La Fontaine. Stories from the Bible. Macdonald, 8/6, 8/6 and 21/-. Three children's books of charm, colour and originality. The illustrations, by J. L. Huens, Simonne Baudoin and N. Dufourt respectively, are models of their kind, exciting and evocative, and the texts equally satisfactory. Ideal for birthday presents.

AT THE BALLET

Hazaña; Giselle (SADLER'S WELLS)
Les Rendezvous (COVENT GARDEN)

MADAME RAMBERT opened her season at Sadler's Wells, with a new ballet of striking originality. *Hazaña* is a dramatic episode of the sort which transatlantic choreographers are fond of exploiting in carefully stylized

action to which dancing, as such, tends to be an incidental appendage. The action of this short ballet by Norman Morrice passes in a Latin-American village on the eve of a religious festival and in the precincts of an unfinished church. In a setting of scaffolding and masonry, devised with imaginative simplicity and realism by Ralph Koltai, interest is concentrated throughout on a great stone cross. It wants only to be lifted to its destined position of dominance.

For reasons not clearly communicated by the choreography the workmen who should do the job refuse and it is left to one of them, encouraged by his wife and young daughter, and by the parish priest, to essay the Herculean task. Miraculously he accomplishes it. Unfortunately the stage illusion is impaired because in the midst of all the realism the heavy cross is obviously a light-weight stage property. It is the actor in his travail who should hold one's eye and not the cross which, one is acutely aware, he could lift with one hand.

None the less, this second work by Mr. Morrice to be done by the Rambert Ballet—the first was *Two Brothers*—shows that he is a choreographer of something more than promise. John Chesworth as the faithful labourer and Gillian Martlew and June Sandbrook as his wife and daughter create the characters with pleasing economy. Mr. Morrice appears as the priest.

Outstanding in the company's small-scale *Giselle* is Beryl Goldwyn's performance, first as the ingenuous village maiden cruelly deceived, and then in her reappearance after death as a Wili. The company is fortunate to possess in Miss Goldwyn a ballerina who, with unassuming command and seemingly effortless

grace, is wonderfully satisfying in all the moods with which this romantic classic abounds.

Les Rendezvous, Frederick Ashton's first complete creation for the Vic-Wells Ballet, was inspired by a desire to invent a vehicle for the dancing of Alicia Markova and Stanislas Idzikowski. That was more than twenty-five years ago, but such was the young choreographer's command of his medium that this captivating trifle, now brought for the first time to Covent Garden, might well pass for his most recent work.

Auber's ballet music in *L'Enfant Prodigue*, which Constant Lambert arranged and orchestrated, is gay and melodious and an irresistible invitation to the dance. *Les Rendezvous* is, in short, a delicious musical *soufflé* danced with elegance and wit in an enchantingly frivolous décor by William Chappell. Nadia Nerina and Brian Shaw shine in the leading parts and there is a joyous *pas de trois*, by Merle Park, Graham Usher and Petrus Bosman.

— C. B. MORTLOCK

AT THE PLAY

Ulysses in Nighttown (ARTS)
Caught Napping (PICCADILLY)
Beware of Angels (WESTMINSTER)
Marigold (SAVOY)
Lock Up Your Daughters (MERMAID)

IT is obvious that to transform for the stage even a small part of Joyce's masterpiece must be a formidable operation. The work is a vast, shimmering kaleidoscope of tiny interlocking parts: each page contains echoes from a page that has passed, or a page still to come, and these echoes clash and murmur



"Know his latest? He's allergic to fall-out."

together in one of literature's most haunting experiences. The creators of *Ulysses in Nighthtown*, Marjorie Barkentin and Burgess Meredith, have made a brave and lively attempt at adaptation, but *Ulysses* remains too subtle, too dependent for its effects upon Joyce's uncanny mastery of a variety of prose styles, ever to emerge in the theatre as anything more than a flickering, if recognizable, shadow. So necessary is the printed page to a proper enjoyment of the work that the adaptors have had to make use of a Narrator (Allan McClelland, doing a difficult job without a falter): this device, no doubt employed reluctantly, is essential—and it therefore shows the underlying weakness of the whole enterprise.

The form chosen is simple. There are two preliminary sequences, in which we meet first Stephen and then Bloom (fragments from the opening Martello tower scene and from the drive to Paddy Dignam's funeral): from these episodes we are expected to learn enough about the main characters to enable us to appreciate all that follows. What follows is a series of incidents from the enormous nightmare of the Circe chapter, staged

with wonderful verve and cunning in a make-do-and-mend kind of setting, with plenty of vivid movement, colour, raucous music and acceptable brouhaha—samples of Joyce's uproarious stage directions being read by the Narrator. The play ends as Bloom, having rescued Stephen from the drunken soldiery, pathetically sees in him a substitute for his own dead son.

Zero Mostel, as Bloom, draws magnificently on his music-hall experience in the comic moments, and at other times moves us swiftly to pity by a gesture, an expression, a sudden eloquence of immobility. This is a performance of rare power. Brian O'Higgins, as Simon Dedalus in the funeral scene, is your Dublin man to a T, and in the Nighthtown capers he is as unerringly on the target as I forget how many other characters. Alan Badel looks and speaks and moves well as Stephen. For the rest, there are wonders done in the way of quick changes and neat characterization by a host of eager and talented participants. But it is Mostel's Bloom that will stay in the mind: for this, for the guts of Burgess Meredith's production, and for the untrammelled humour of James Joyce, I recommend a visit.

Geoffrey Lumsden, in *Caught Napping*, has managed that perilous theatrical tightrope walk—the construction of a farce—without plunging us all into boredom or irritated disbelief for more than half a page of script at a time. It is an achievement to be proud of. The work falls a long way behind the Ben



Caught Napping

Dr. Rodd—RAYMOND HUNTLEY

logue which struck me as laboured. In this tricky medium it is unwise to give the impression of trying to be funny.

This applies equally to the *acting* of farce, and I cannot let Leslie Randall go scot-free here. He sometimes overstepped even the generous limits allowed him by the author, and acted the giddy goat too obviously. This was a pity, because at other times his performance has an appropriately comic earnestness of touch. George Benson, Raymond Huntley, Nan Munro and Geoffrey Lumsden himself were all exactly in key, proving that farce-playing in the old Aldwych tradition has not entirely died out. Of the other artists involved in a genial evening's hullabaloo I particularly liked the work of Graham Armitage and Basil Lord. Direction, crisp and far from laggardly, was by Anthony Sharp.

With one exception, the characters in *Beware of Angels* are about as credibly drawn as the figures in a six-part serial in a parish magazine of the nineteen-twenties, and are supplied with appropriate dialogue. The exception, a Soho club proprietor, sticks out like a healed thumb and is played with relish by Campbell Singer. For the rest, this creaking study in hypocrisy and frustration in Devon struck me as a waste of time and actors.

For those amiable reactionaries who prefer the good old Musical Comedy to the upstart Musical, Alan Melville's *Marigold* will have a strong appeal. The unadulterated sweetness of this tale of young love in early Victorian Scotland (boy meets girl, boy gets girl—and what more do you want?) is perfectly matched by nice, unadventurous music, very bright and pleasing settings, and a performance of huggable charm by a tiny soul called Sally Smith as Marigold. The evening's high-spot is the dancing of a reel in Edinburgh Castle, and Jean Kent brings the house down with a funny line based on the stinginess of Scotsmen. You may safely take the children.

Finally, I suggest that you hurry along to see *Lock Up Your Daughters* at the earliest opportunity. This roistering musical play made by Bernard Miles from Fielding's *Rape Upon Rape* is delightful entertainment. Cunningly presented on a wide open stage equipped with a revolve and some imaginatively workmanlike sets by Sean Kenny, it moves with gay speed through all the outrageous humours of an eighteenth-century bedroom farce. Laurie Johnson's music is appealing and very well played, Lionel Bart's lyrics (with one exception) are sufficiently sharp, and the players—particularly Richard Wordsworth and Hy Hazell—bring vividly to life a rollicking set of characters. As for the Mermaid itself, it is surely the most exciting playhouse in London.

— ALEX ATKINSON

AT THE PICTURES

The Devil's General
Pork Chop Hill
The Hangman

ALTHOUGH *The Devil's General* (Director: Helmut Kautner) has been shown at the National Film Theatre, and some critics wrote about it when it was at the Venice Film Festival, it is only now having a London run; and I found it so much the most enjoyable of the pictures press-shown this time that I should like to do what I can to recommend it.

It is adapted (by George Hurdalek and the director) from a play by Carl Zuckmayer, and it is in essence a skilfully contrived, comparatively artificial story: the incidents fall into place neatly, it is by no means a "slice of life." But it is an admirable bit of film-making, not at all theatrical in impression, and the acting is first-rate. This was the film that made Curt Jurgens internationally known, and it is safe to say that he hasn't since had anything like such a chance to show his ability.

He appears as a Luftwaffe general, in Berlin in 1941; a rather flamboyant figure, who flew in the first war, and has sentimental recollections of the days when fighting still had a touch of sport about it. He is apt too often to show his disrespect for the mean-minded demagogues now ruling his country, he makes jokes about them, and Himmler's secret police are alert to catch him out when he cannot call on "Hermann" (Goering) for protection. One particular S.S. general, a very smooth character, watches him nearly all the time, and at last he is given a dose of "psychological treatment" in an S.S. prison—no violence, merely the softening-up effect of planned, organized worry and miserable conditions and the feeling that no friend knows where he is—which it is afterwards pretended was a mistake.

The story concerns a mystery about possible sabotage of Luftwaffe planes, and his love for a charming girl (again the middle-aged-man-and-young-girl situation, which one finds so often now that it is obvious that the market-researchers have told film-makers it is



Lieutenant Clemons—GREGORY PECK

very popular). The piece is, as I say, skilfully constructed, and it ends almost too neatly; but Curt Jurgens's fine, dashing performance and the admirably-handled detail—from the significant look caught in the shaving-mirror to the expansive, relaxed scene of the singing people at the party—make it satisfying and worth-while entertainment.

A simpler war story is *Pork Chop Hill* (Director: Lewis Milestone), which is announced as true: "in most cases not even the names have been changed." This deals with an episode of the Korean war, in 1953 while the peace talks were proceeding at Panmunjom. The point is that a company, King Company, is ordered to take and hold Pork Chop Hill (seventy miles east of Panmunjom) because it is a valuable bargaining counter in the peace negotiations; and most of the picture is concerned with the difficult, almost suicidal action. The lieutenant in command (Gregory Peck) is reminded that his one hundred and thirty-five men are "all thinking of the peace talks" and "won't want to die in the last battle," and himself is wearily aware that they are fighting for hardly more than a point of prestige in someone else's argument. They cannot be reinforced or withdrawn. We are pulled in to the fearful confusion of the battle, see how the company is cut down to something over twenty survivors, and get by implication the point that the director of *All Quiet on the Western Front* has made before: that war is senseless as well as hellish. Mr. Peck is good as the strong, bitter but inspiring leader, and there are a

great many good sketches by the small-part men.

The Hangman (Director: Michael Curtiz) is a somewhat glum and rugged Western, but it is well done, with some excellent sequences and a real effort to show the day-to-day detail of ordinary life and hardly any shooting. Robert Taylor appears as a deputy marshal, "toughest law-man in the territory," who is known for always getting his man and is now on the surface hard and unemotional about it. He is convinced that the "human race is full of rats," and most of the men he deals with give him no cause to change his opinion—but of course there is a woman (Tina Louise) who manages to. Mr. Taylor very well shows the gradual, reluctant crumbling of his defences.

* * * * *

Survey
(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

A special word for Bergman's *Summer with Monika* (24/12/58), which has at last got as near as the Cameo-Poly, Oxford Circus—though only as a second feature. *Some Like it Hot* (27/5/59) is rowdy, raucous, vulgar and among the funniest things I ever saw in my life. Gentler fun in *The Shaggy Dog* (20/5/59). Very impressive final sequence in *The Case of Dr. Laurent* (27/5/59). The Hungarian *A Sunday Romance* (13/5/59), and *Room at the Top* (4/2/59), and *Gigi* (18/2/59) continue.

One admirable release: *Sapphire* (20/5/59)—don't miss it. Bob Hope's *Alias Jesse James* (29/4/59) has many good cracks and gags, but it doesn't jell.

— RICHARD MALLETT

PUNCH EXHIBITIONS

The "Punch in the Theatre" Exhibition is at the Perth Repertory Theatre, Perth Art Gallery, and Pitlochry Festival Theatre.

The *Punch* cinema cartoon exhibition is at the Odeon Cinema, Epsom, by arrangement with the Rank Organisation.

"Punch With Wings," showing the history of flying, is at the Metropole Hotel, Brighton, until June 6, and at the Art Gallery, Brighton, from June 8.

AT THE GALLERY

Duncan Grant (Tate)

DUNCAN—as such he is known to several generations of painters—is not as widely appreciated as he should be. Far from concurring with the view expressed in one or two quarters that his day is over, I would aver, on the contrary, that he is about to come into his own more than ever before, for this reason: during the last fifteen years or so there has arisen a kind of intelligent, independently-minded art lover who does a bit of painting on his own. These holiday painters put up their easels at just the same sort of agreeable places: harbours, hills, and villages; and face just the same painters' problems as Duncan has tackled for the last fifty years with a vitality, wit and distinction which have rendered him ageless and probably immortal.

These instructed people, even if they cannot command his execution, the result of a sedulously cultivated gift, can gain much from him in the way of visual education. They will give him his true worth as an artist. Take his barn (No. 75) with its sharp slot of outside light, its softer inner light and heavy shadows; how rich in colour, how firmly drawn and how unfussed it is in spite of the complexity of subject. And what could be more of a headache to a painter than a view of a bright landscape from an interior—if we are not going to lose one or the other? Again, see how Duncan handles this, always maintaining a balance between the lure of the inside and that of the outside (No. 53).

Another joyous solution of a similar problem is by Pierre Bonnard whose "Farm at Vernon," a much worked study in cerulean, mauve and gold, is one of the highlights of a really magnificent large show at the Marlborough Gallery which includes Cézanne, Matisse, and Braque.

Norfolk Enterprise

In aid of the Contemporary Art Society an Exhibition of twenty-six modern paintings (mostly well known British) at the home of Mrs. Colman, Framingham Chase, Norwich, June 6th—14th. (Lectures and Discussions in addition.)

Duncan Grant, Tate Gallery. Closes June 20th. — ADRIAN DAINTREY

ON THE AIR

Too Old at Forty?

SOME weeks ago this magazine published a spoof advertising supplement, a double-page of small-ads. depicting such attractions as a plastic garage-cover, a nose remodelling outfit, step-in trousers and miniature (stamp-size) "culture cards." The response was somewhat alarming. While



regular readers were amused (many of them were kind enough to advise us of this fact) others took the feature at more than its face value and attempted to transact business with the dummy advertisers. There were requests for do-it-yourself taxidermy sets (one gentleman, having five children, sent the money for five sets), for garage covers, trousers, noses and so on. From Abyssinia came a request for a complete set of culture cards. From the United States came an offer for American rights in these gems of potted erudition. We are grateful to all (though the money has now been returned) and promise to repeat our successful venture into fictitious commercialism before long.

What has all this to do with "On the Air"? Well, this—that with so much practical experience stacked behind him the TV critic is entitled to write with more than everyday confidence about the great, bright, noisy field of televised commercials. I have been on holiday from Independent TV for some months, and the holiday has done me good: I can now listen to the jingles with interest, sometimes with pleasure; I can even stomach the animated cartoon symbols, the dancing bottles, the vocal packets of suet, the crooning sachets of shampoo and so on. The mood will not last, I know, so I propose to have my say before disenchantment sets in.

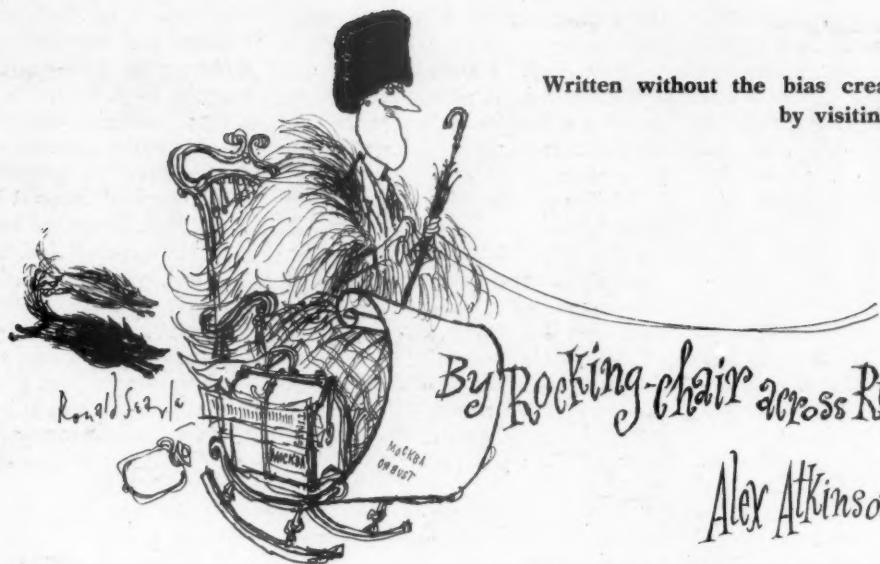
The commercials have improved quite remarkably during the last two years—not, I hasten to add, in æsthetic appeal, but in their general efficiency. The jingles are jinglier, the visual explosions more violent, the accents more mid-Atlantic than ever. Everything, it seems, is N . . N-E-W! And, of course, more scientific. The pace is killing. Within a minute or so we are confronted by close-ups of cat food, shampoo, blocked nasal passages, self-slicing jelly-mix, disinfectant, nylons, lollies and more cat food. We have never had it so good.

The commercials set such a pace that

the programme contractors inevitably limp hot and faint in pursuit. For five minutes of the documentary "Fear Begins at Forty—the Threshold of Middle Age" I was waiting eagerly for the mercantile pay-off that never came. A fridge? No. That bracing, tissue-restoring holiday? No. Some cunning new power-drill to keep old dad happy? No. I liked this programme. The loose ends would have provided enough material for a hearthrug, the clichés would have affronted Ernest Bevin—but the story had immense drive and startling realism. More than anything I admired Independent TV's willingness to poke gentle fun at life in an advertising agency, and to comment on the unnerving pressure of highly competitive commerce. The BBC would not, I think, have made the picture so frank and revealing. Nor would it have swallowed some of the more pointed and allusive dialogue. This television was adult, crisp, imaginative and socially useful. Good marks to Julian Bond for his script, to Antony Kearey for his production.

I can still find nothing on ITV to challenge the BBC between 6.45 and 7.30 p.m., not even "Find the Singer" which features what is advertised as the "Mink Tone" Music of the Lou Preager Orchestra. Michelmore's little lot have the edge night after night, and I cannot understand why Associated Rediffusion are content to offer such feeble competition.

I'm afraid *Hilda Lessways*, the new BBC serial, will not quite hit the standard of *Love and Mr. Lewisham*. Arnold Bennett's strength as a novelist lies in his subtle delineation of female character, a quality impossible, I think, to reproduce in half-hours of televised adaptation. Moreover, there is a tendency for the leading roles to be heavily over-acted, while the accents are certain to prove strangely harsh and unacceptable to anyone with a nodding acquaintance of the Potteries. — BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



Written without the bias created
by visiting the country

By Rocking-chair across Russia

Alex Atkinson

I

BURNS NIGHT IN MOSCOW

I HAD long wished to visit the Soyuz Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik, and the only thing that ever really held me back was the difficulty of finding digs. As a matter of fact, not to put too fine a point on it, I believe that subtle obstacles were continually placed in my way. Time and again I wrote civilly enough to the Town Clerk of Zhadanov asking for a list of medium-priced boarding-houses with a view of the Sea of Azov and no restrictions about the emptying of sand out of one's turn-ups in the vestibule, and time and again all I got back was a picture post-card of Miss Zhadanov of 1931, with a message saying "The people of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic send greetings to the steel-workers of Surrey." The cancellation mark over the stamp usually said "Love your combine harvester—it is your only friend," and Miss Zhadanov was a squat matron in bathing drawers, with her hair parted in the middle and a coy scowl on her face.

It was the same with Okhotsk. I asked repeatedly for the address of a clean, respectable room on the front facing the Kamchatka peninsula, with details of day-trips to Magadan and some account of friendly casinos in the area, or picnic facilities in the foothills of the Verkhoyansk Range: but I never got a single reply, and I must say I have entertained grave doubts ever

since about the efficiency of the Trans-Siberian Railway.

It is conceivable, of course, that there were sinister implications in the persistent rebuffs I received. I may at some time have been involved without knowing it in some widespread political imbroglio, an unwitting pawn in a desperate international battle of wits. My name may have been listed in heavily guarded books entitled "Known Deviationists" or "Absentee Landlords" or even "They Liked Ike." My picture may have been carried by every Secret Policeman from Minsk to Vladivostok, and a reward of several thousand roubles offered for my capture, dead or alive. But this seems highly improbable, in view of my record. Did I not take the *Daily Worker* for six solid months, after their racing correspondent, bravely standing alone, successfully tipped Russian Hero to win the 1949 Grand National? Did I not repeatedly urge my corporal during World War II to open a second front now, and did he not eventually yield? Had I not kept *Das Kapital* by my bedside for years, as being cheaper than aspirin and not so fidgety as sheep? How then could I have been seriously regarded as the Terror of the Steppes?

Still, the ugly fact remains—they barred my way. They were so obstructionist that I finally gave up all ideas of a seaside holiday in a secluded little Russian bay or inlet, with the balalaika music of the collectivized peasants weaving its strange, barbaric spell as I

sipped my vodka beneath the striped awning outside some gay little dram shop, and the pack ice crunching in the harbour. I went to Bognor instead, and Scarborough, and once even as far as Berwick-upon-Tweed.

But the yearning persisted, and with it a feeling of guilt. Was I doing enough, I asked myself, to help in boring a hole through the Iron Curtain, to further understanding and better cultural relations between, say, the cotton-pickers of Bokhara and my grocer, a man called Richards with a son in the Young Conservatives and a growing collection of beer-mats? It was plain that I was not, and the feeling that I was letting things go from bad to worse disturbed my dreams, until at last I threw a few things into a bag, sold up my car and all but three of my Premium Bonds, and booked a passage to Moscow.

As I told reporters at the time, it was plain that *somebody* had to get over there pretty quickly and have a few heart-to-heart talks, with all cards on the table and a frank exchange of views.

"I shall not be going in any really official capacity," I said in the communiqué I issued on the eve of my departure, "but the members of the Cabinet are fully aware of the purpose of my trip, and have raised no objections. They know as well as I do that if I can only get around a table with a few people like Nikolai Ilich Belayev, Pyotr Nikolayevich Pospelov, Donald Maclean, Madame Yekaterina Furtseva or Nikita S. Khrushchev, the consequences for

the future could be incalculable, at the very least. I feel I can no longer stand aside," I said, "and watch the rift widening without raising a finger. I feel that once I can get an average Russian in a corner and swap yarns with him about proportional representation, English cheddar, football pools, the Liberal revival, drip-dry shirts, purchase tax, the migration of swallows, colour television, the metric system and the unutterable foolishness of the Marxist dialectic, it will only be a matter of time before the satellite countries are given their freedom, political prisoners released, a Tory majority returned in the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, and Uzbek families allowed at last to flock to London in their thousands for Royal Ascot."

I took with me a few symbols of our Western way of life—not so much to boast as to open the eyes of our Russian friends to the marvellous scope and variety of our culture, about which they are so woefully in the dark. Thus among other things I took a small sliced loaf, a four-bladed penknife, a platform ticket, a copy of *Blighty*, a handful of salted peanuts, a photograph of a Red Coat at a holiday camp persuading a Birmingham fishmonger to enter for the Slimmest Ankle Contest, some tinned rhubarb, a tape-recording of Alfred Lord Tennyson reading "The Charge of the Light Brigade," and a selection of fourth leaders from *The Times*.

Perhaps I can best illustrate my burning determination to establish contact with these mysterious people at the earliest possible moment by outlining a conversation I had on the Russian 'plane not ten minutes after we took off from Copenhagen on that cold, grey afternoon in January. The air-hostess was a dark, plump girl of about forty, dressed in a lace cap, a black bombazine bodice, elastic-sided boots and a prim little jabot of white georgette. She wore no make-up and smelt of antiseptic soap and mothballs. More than once I noticed the skittish flounce of her petticoats as she passed to and fro issuing copies of yesterday's *Pravda* and humming some provocative little folksong from Odessa. At last, when she came along at teatime to light the intricately carved candle in the ornate sconce which jutted from the inlaid mahogany bulwark just above my head, I

threw caution to the winds and seized her arm.

"Ninotchka!" I cried hoarsely.

She blushed. A middle-aged spy in an obvious disguise sat bolt upright in the seat in front, listening intently: but I was not to be put off.

"Tell me," I said, reverting to English, "which is your afternoon off?"

"Thursday," she replied, with hardly a trace of accent, drawing the knitted curtains across my little window and smoothing down my antimacassar.

"Splendid," I said. "Meet me at six outside the L.N. Tolstoy Museum in Kropotkin Street and I will show you the town. Perhaps the Bolshoi, and a couple of night-clubs to follow, eh?" And I winked.

"Sure thing," she whispered, her stainless steel teeth clashing together voluptuously.

"It was never like this on Aer Lingus," I murmured, and she withdrew to her seat at the back and threw her apron over her head.

A trivial incident, perhaps, but I think it serves to show how very narrow is the gulf that separates our two ways of life. It is also interesting to note that she didn't turn up. I stood shivering in my snow-shoes in the draught that blows up Kropotkin Street from the Moskva for an hour and a half, until two members of the M.V.D. moved me on, evidently suspecting that I was about to break into the museum and scribble all over the manuscript of *War and Peace*.

I have nothing but praise for the way Intourist looked after me. I was met at the airport at Vnukovo, hustled into a six-cylinder Zis with horsehair tip-up seats and a built-in ormolu clock, and rushed straight to Moscow. On the way the driver, a tall man called Serge, wearing a double-breasted navy blue suit and a brown trilby hat without a dinge, introduced himself as a keen follower of Wolverhampton Wanderers, and asked if I would care to visit a model safety-pin factory. "It is on our route," he confided, lowering his voice, "and I think I could get you in." When I explained that I was anxious to reach my hotel and unpack he became surly.

"You will go home to England," he said, "and you will spread poison, saying we would not permit you to see a model safety-pin factory. Then you

will refuse to let China into the United Nations, and your workers will weep." Suddenly he brightened. "Do you know," he asked, "that there are twenty thousand workers reduced to begging in the streets of Chelsea alone at this time?" I said I didn't know. (To be perfectly frank, I didn't believe it.) "Such things are not reported in your newspapers," said Serge smugly, "because your leaders, William Pitt and Sir Oswald Mosley, fear an uprising. One day the truth will make itself known, and the people of Chelsea, Arsenal and West Bromwich Albion will revolt and burn down the House of Representatives."

"The House of Representatives," I said, "is in America."

"Aha," said Serge. "That's what they tell you."

I found something pathetic in the ignorance Serge displayed about Britain and the British way of life, and I'm afraid he was typical of many of the Muscovites I met during my stay. The strangest notions prevail among them, and although I did all I could to persuade them of the true state of things over here, I believe they prefer to revel in their blindness.

By a happy chance I arrived in Moscow on Burns Night, and as soon as I had unpacked and taken a glass of tea and a caviar sandwich I made my way to the Red Square to join the merrymaking. It was early afternoon, but already the streets were filling with revellers. It was an incredible sight. From far and near they came—from the lonely outlying villages where wolves slink through the frozen sable-farms; from semi-detached *dachas* in the exclusive suburbs; from collectives in the wild and distant wastes around Yoroslavl' and Smolensk; from the teeming tenement skyscrapers that rise like boxes of people throughout the Russian capital; from embassies and Government buildings, factories and coal-mines, labour camps and luxury suites in the Leningradskaya Hotel—a whole army of people on pleasure bent, drawn to the historic Red Square by their reverence for the humble Ayrshire poet. Ox-carts groaned hub to hub along the crowded, slushy streets, crammed with gaily-ribboned peasants already drunk on home-brewed Scotch. The trolley-buses came lurching to a stop at the terminus, to disgorge fifty





people at a time, all in their Sunday best, their scrupulously polished faces beaming with anticipation, their pockets bulging with oatcakes and home-made porridge. The air grew loud with snatches of song, raucous shouts, the occasional crash of a bottle being hurled on to a roof. Everywhere there was excited movement, as the multitude surged this way and that—clamouring into the dark-brown pubs (which had an extension until midnight), dancing jigs up snow-filled alleys, quarrelling, singing, praying, waving rattles. Some wore crude astrakhan sporran, and from a far corner of the Square I heard the slow, sad wail of the pipes as someone struck up the Lament for Wee MacGregor. As each Underground train arrived at the Red Square Station (change here for Gorky Street and the Sickle Line) hundreds of yelling suburbanites came pouring up the steps to add to the joyful throng. At one time I counted just under three million people in the Square, and by six o'clock

were lit, so that presently the whole Square was a sea of garish, dancing lights, and the proceedings took an orgiastic turn. Men, women and children moved in a close-packed mass, wolfsing down handfuls of fresh haggis, passing mugs of fiery liquor from hand to hand, forming squads of a hundred and fifty at a time to dance the Gay Gordons, duelling with improvised skean-dhus in the shadow of Lenin's tomb, kissing other people's wives, swirling round in trews and ribboned bonnets. It was an unforgettable scene, and rather frightening. Faces were inflamed from drink and the flickering torchlight. A continual, unearthly rumble of noise swept up to the frosty sky, punctuated by screams, the groans of the dying, wild cries of "Hoots!" or "Good old Robbie!" pistol shots, the clash of sabres, the neighing of terrified horses, and the war-whoops of a battalion of drunken Cossacks trying to clear a space for a schottische. Here and there a brown bear sniffed for scraps along the

there must have been even more, for at about that time the Dynamo team arrived in a coach dating back to the time of Boris Godunov, drawn by a hundred members of their Fan Club and followed by a procession of Honoured Inside Rights, second class. At a lighted upstairs window in the Kremlin, Khrushchev watched the proceedings with a merry twinkle in his eye, turning now and then to toast Mikoyan or the Minister of Culture, who stood beside him, and sometimes waving to acknowledge a more than usually fervent burst of cheering from below. Huge portraits of Burns waved crazily above the heads of the crowd, and as it grew dark great torches

gutters, which by now were awash with melted snow and whisky. On hastily erected rostrums impassioned professors from the Academy of Sciences vied with one another in reciting "The Cotter's Saturday Night" or "Holy Willie's Prayer." Beside me an executive from the Central Polytechnical Library of the All-Union Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge kept bouncing up and down, shouting "Up the Rangers!" at the utmost power of his lungs; while from the roof of a bus stranded hopelessly in a sea of festive humanity a burly commissar in a Royal Stuart kilt (evidently a Celtic supporter) pelted him with bawbees.

Finally, as the bells of all the churches in the Kremlin struck the hour of twelve, from some tall minaret a solitary, majestic, rich bass voice boomed out the opening notes of "Auld Lang Syne." It was a moment of outlandish beauty. A hush fell over the millions in the Square: and then, with a mighty surge of sound, every single voice joined in the chorus. The effect was awe-inspiring. Linking arms with my neighbours, I sang as best I could, although I have never been absolutely sure of the words. Indeed the peasant on my right gave me more than one suspicious look as I fumbled the less familiar syllables. Then, as the last notes died away, the festivities came abruptly to an end. The light went out in Khrushchev's window. Plain-clothes M.V.D. men, emerging from the darkest shadows round the Square, swung their knouts meaningfully. The crowd dispersed. In silence, with bowed heads, they shuffled away, until in all that wide space there was no living thing to be seen except myself. An unearthly stillness brooded over the Red Square. A ragged tam-o'-shanter, jerked across the cobbles by a fretful wind, was all the evidence that remained of the long night's boisterous revelry.

In the morning, as I looked out across the Red Square from the barred windows of my hotel, I found it hard to believe that I had not been dreaming. *Next Week: The Man in the Street*

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